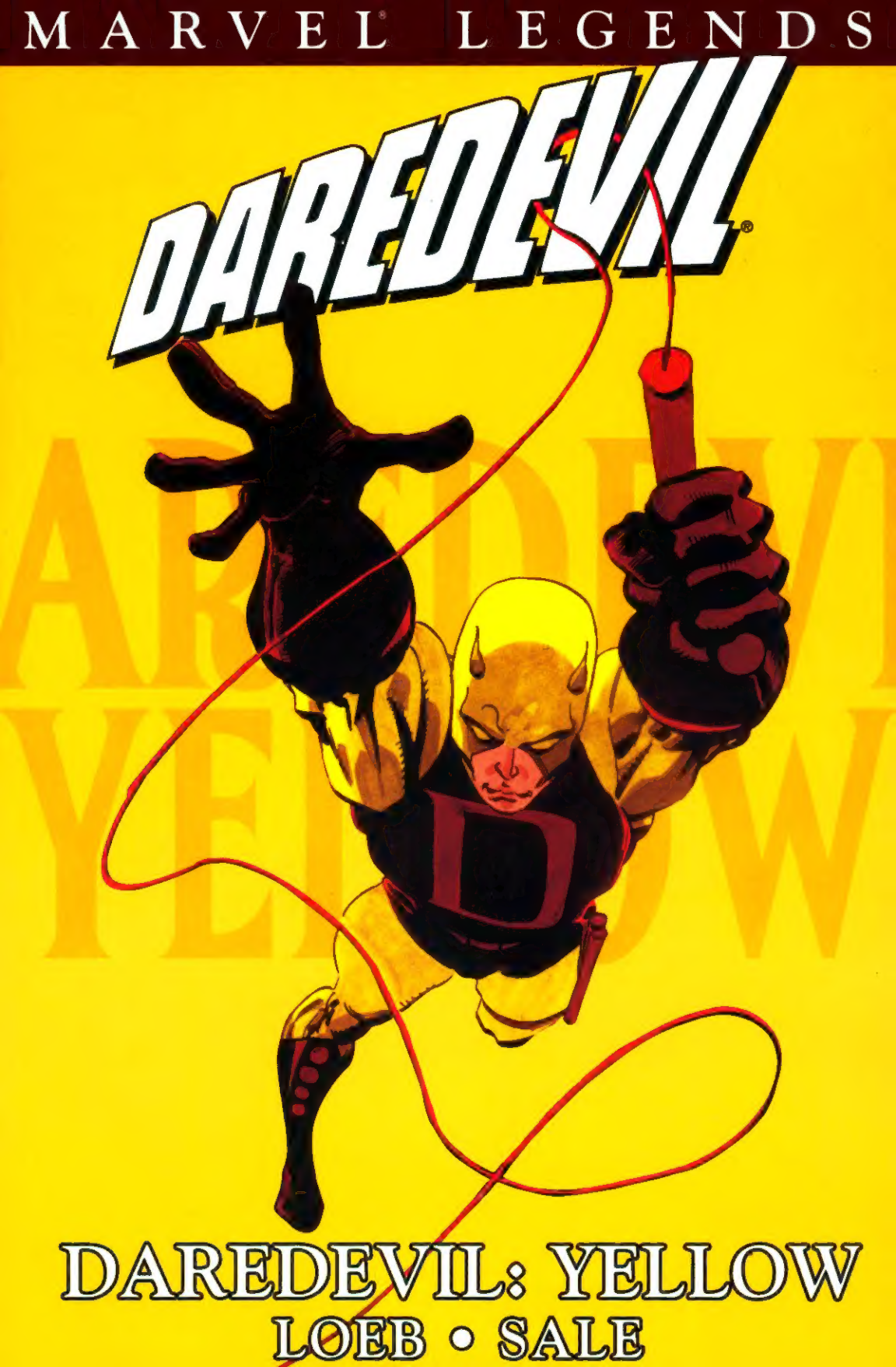
MARVEL LEGENDS

DAREDEVIL



DAREDEVIL: YELLOW

LOEB • SALE

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JEPH LOEB · TIM SALE
Storytellers

RICHARD STARKINGS & COMICRAFT'S WES ABBOTT
Lettering

MATT HOLLINGSWORTH
Colors

JOHN "JG" ROSHELL OF COMICRAFT
Book Design

BRONWYN TAGGART & STUART MOORE
Original Series Editors

KELLY LAMY
Associate Managing Editor

NANCI DAKESIAN
Managing Editor

JOE QUESADA
Man Without Fear

BILL JEMAS
President

DAREDEVIL LEGENDS VOL. 1: DAREDEVIL: YELLOW. Contains material originally published in magazine form as Daredevil: Yellow #1-6 . First printing 2002. ISBN# 0-7851-0969-2. Published by MARVEL COMICS, a division of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 10 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016.
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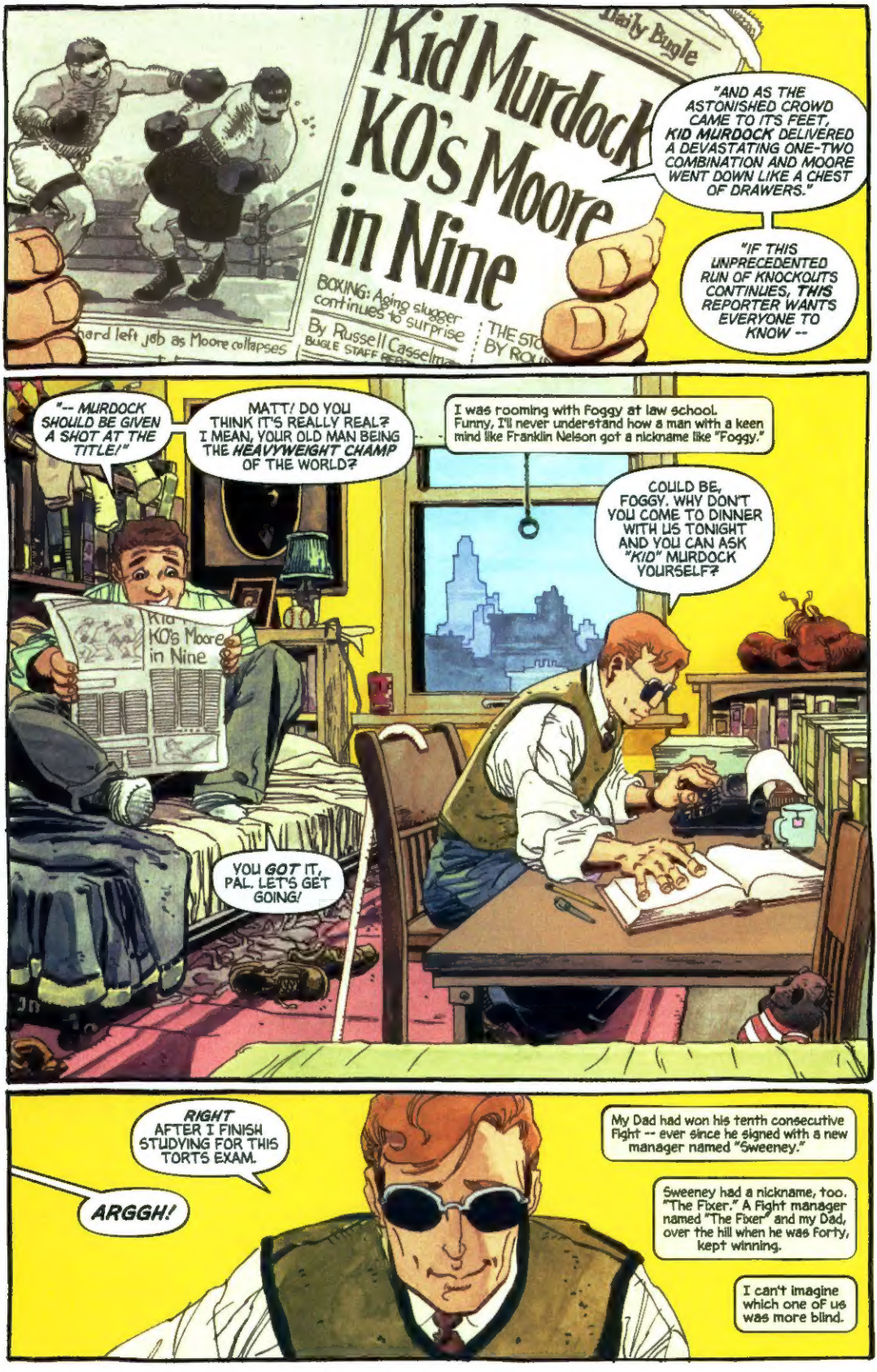
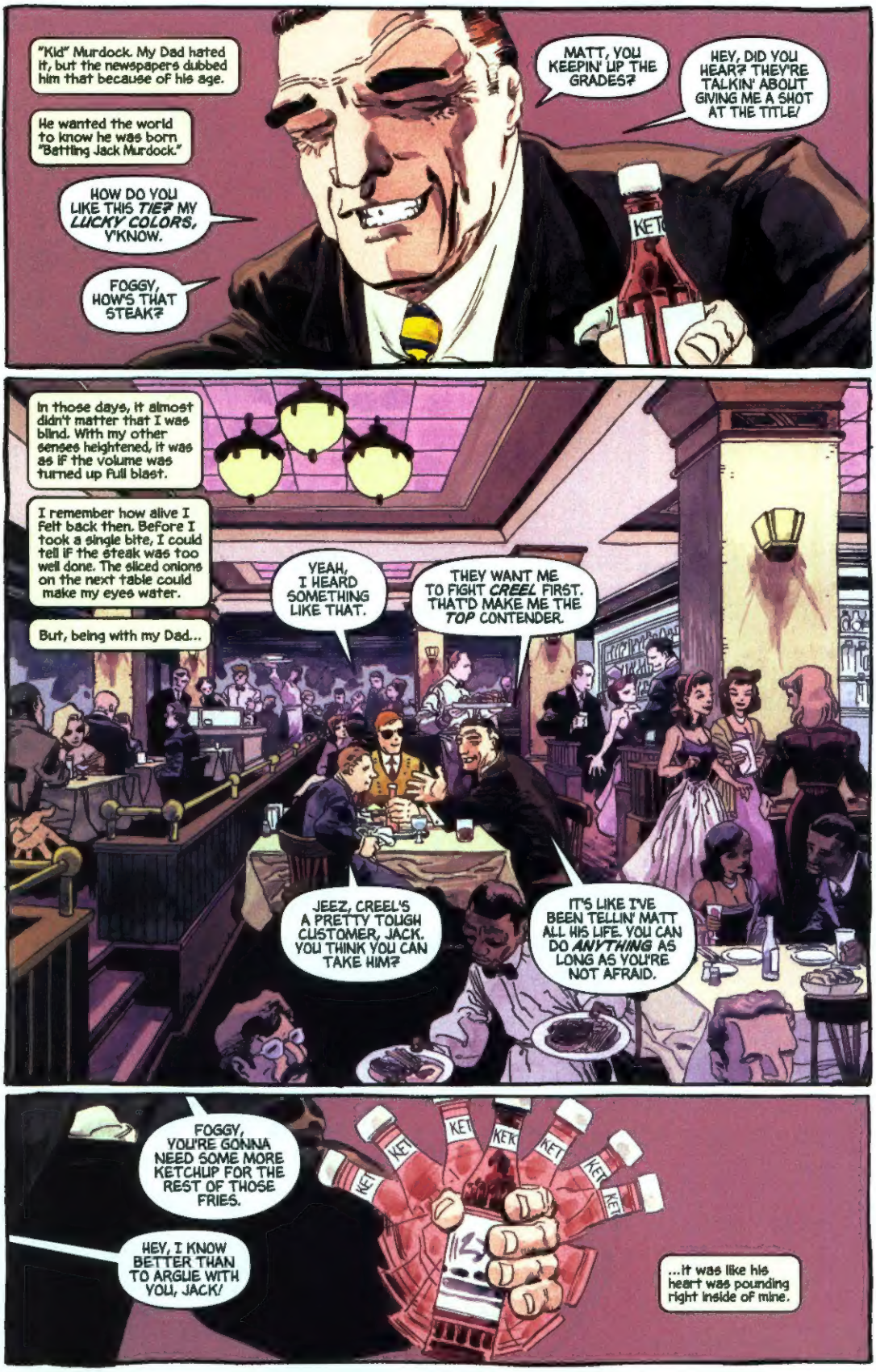
HERE COMES...
DAREDEVIL
Dear Karen, I'm afraid...
TS 2K
DEDICATED TO STAN LEE & BILL EVERETT & WALLY WOOD PRIZEFIGHTERS ALL!
Book One: The CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

Just when I think it is all going to get easier, I close my eyes and I see you in my arms.
It's as if a hole were torn open in the center of my chest. After a while, it starts to close up and...
...someone has a laugh that sounds like you or wears a perfume that smells like you and...
...it tears the hole wide open again.
I don't feel like eating. I find it hard to concentrate.
I can't do my job, Karen. I can't live my life.

It's gotten so bad that now Foggy is worried.
And, as you may remember, when Foggy gets worried, he starts to look for solutions.
Seems he's come up with a suggestion -- I don't know where he gets these things --
-- that I write you a letter.
About how I'm Feeling.
To get it all out.
I've decided it was not the worst idea in the world.
FOGWELL'S GYM
POLICE DO NOT CROSS
ICE

I went over to Fogwell's Gym the other night. There had been a fire and not much was left.
My Dad practically lived in that place.
Years later, even through the ash, all I could smell was his Old Spice aftershave and talcum powder.
KID MURDOCK
I'm not sure what I should be writing to you, but I thought if I went back to the beginning...
...you could help me find "The Man Without Fear" again...


Daily Bugle
Kid Murdock KO's Moore in Nine
BOXING: Aging slugger continues to surprise
By Russell Casselman
"AND AS THE ASTONISHED CROWD CAME TO ITS FEET, KID MURDOCK DELIVERED A DEVASTATING ONE-TWO COMBINATION AND MOORE WENT DOWN LIKE A CHEST OF DRAWERS."
"IF THIS UNPRECEDENTED RUN OF KNOCKOUTS CONTINUES, THIS REPORTER WANTS EVERYONE TO KNOW --
"-- MURDOCK SHOULD BE GIVEN A SHOT AT THE TITLE!"
MATT! DO YOU THINK IT'S REALLY REAL? I MEAN, YOUR OLD MAN BEING THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP OF THE WORLD?
I was rooming with Foggy at law school. Funny, I'll never understand how a man with a keen mind like Franklin Nelson got a nickname like "Foggy."
COULD BE, FOGGY. WHY DON'T YOU COME TO DINNER WITH US TONIGHT AND YOU CAN ASK "KID" MURDOCK YOURSELF?
KO's Moore in Nine
YOU GOT IT, PAL. LET'S GET GOING!
RIGHT AFTER I FINISH STUDYING FOR THIS TORTS EXAM.
ARGGH!
My Dad had won his tenth consecutive fight -- ever since he signed with a new manager named "Sweeney."
Sweeney had a nickname, too. "The Fixer." A fight manager named "The Fixer" and my Dad, over the hill when he was forty, kept winning.
I can't imagine which one of us was more blind.

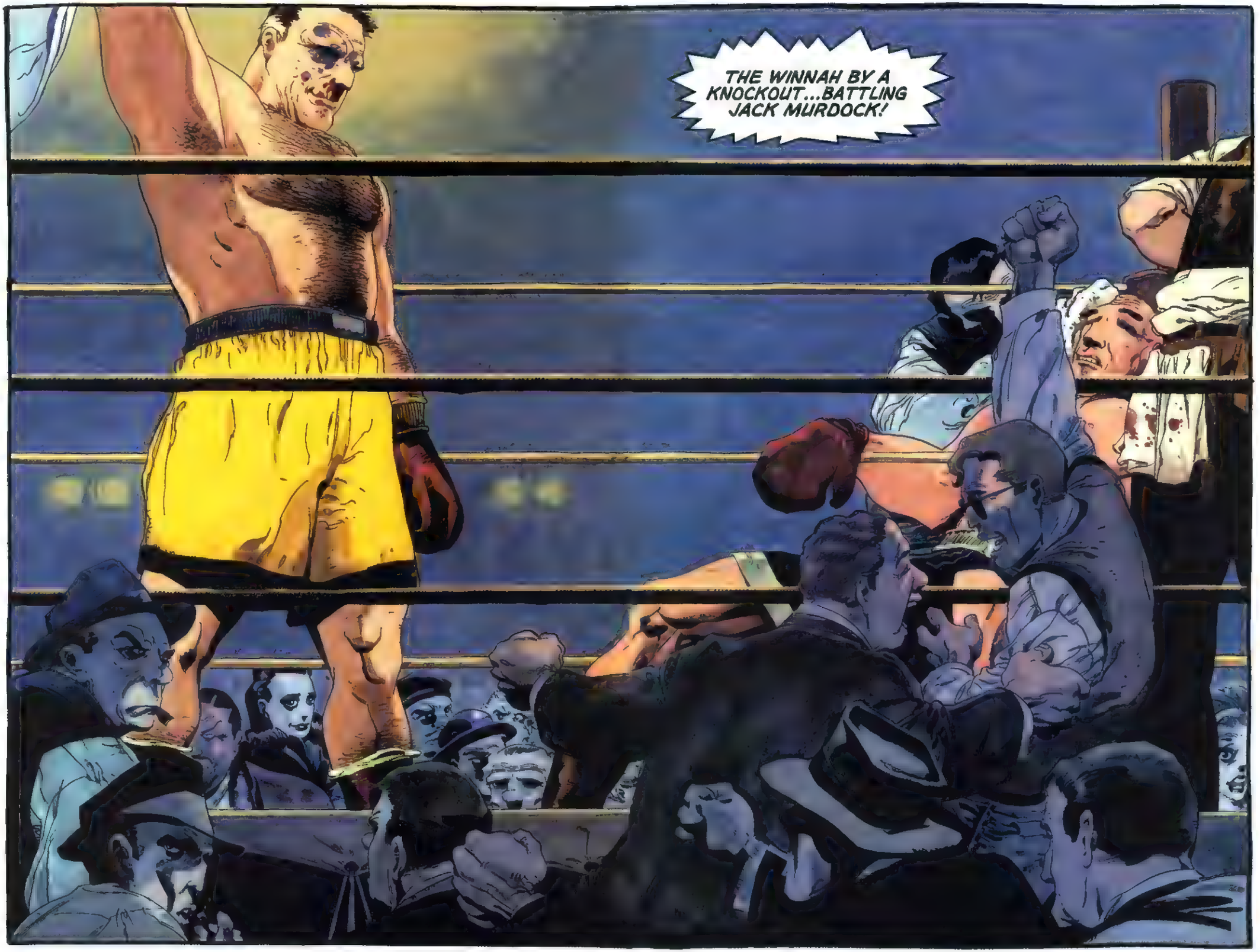

"Kid" Murdock. My Dad hated it, but the newspapers dubbed him that because of his age.
He wanted the world to know he was born "Battling Jack Murdock."
HOW DO YOU LIKE THIS TIE? MY LUCKY COLORS, Y'KNOW.
FOGGY, HOW'S THAT STEAK?
MATT, YOU KEEPIN' UP THE GRADES?
HEY, DID YOU HEAR? THEY'RE TALKIN' ABOUT GIVING ME A SHOT AT THE TITLE!
In those days, it almost didn't matter that I was blind. With my other senses heightened, it was as if the volume was turned up full blast.
I remember how alive I felt back then. Before I took a single bite, I could tell if the steak was too well done. The sliced onions on the next table could make my eyes water.
But, being with my Dad...
YEAH, I HEARD SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THEY WANT ME TO FIGHT CREEL FIRST. THAT'D MAKE ME THE TOP CONTENDER.
JEEZ, CREEL'S A PRETTY TOUGH CUSTOMER, JACK. YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE HIM?
IT'S LIKE I'VE BEEN TELLIN' MATT ALL HIS LIFE. YOU CAN DO ANYTHING AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT AFRAID.
FOGGY, YOU'RE GONNA NEED SOME MORE KETCHUP FOR THE REST OF THOSE FRIES.
HEY, I KNOW BETTER THAN TO ARGUE WITH YOU, JACK!
...it was like his heart was pounding right inside of mine.

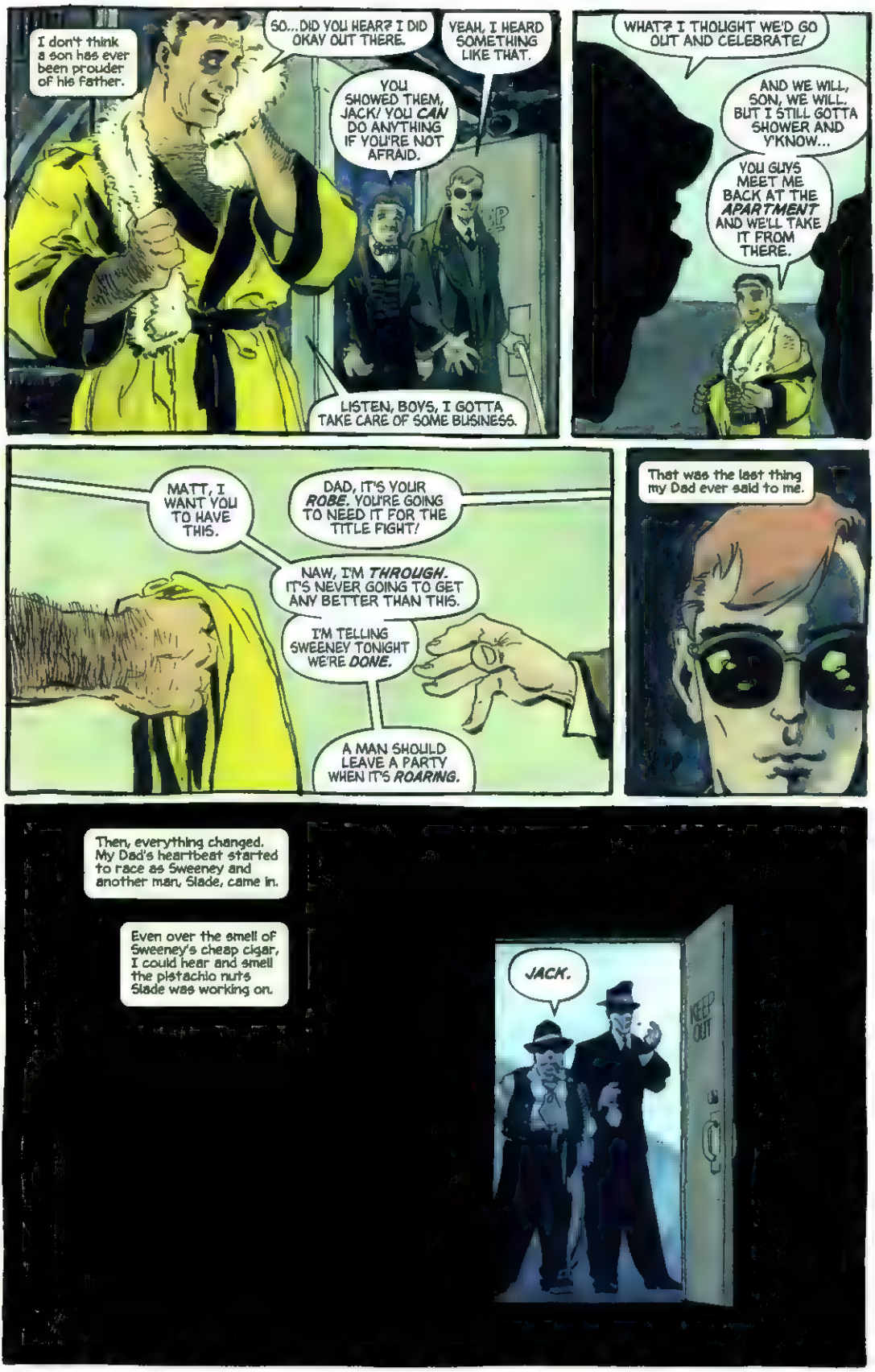
My Dad was a Southpaw. He fought lefty. In boxing, that's not a good thing. It throws you off balance.
I thought it threw his whole world off balance.
EEK!
POP
FAP
OH, BOY.
LADIES, I COULD NOT BE MORE SORRY. I JUST DON'T KNOW MY OWN STRENGTH!
MATT, YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT. HE SPILLED KETCHUP ALL OVER THE PLACE.
OH, I BELIEVE IT, FOGGY.
...SURE, BATTLING JACK MURDOCK, THAT'S ME...
Even from where I was sitting, I could smell Sweeney's cheap cigars on the money as my Dad offered to buy the women dinner...

OH, AND CREEL DELIVERS A WICKED UPPERCUT AND MURDOCK GOES DOWN!
ONE!
TWO!
THREE!
LISSEN TO ME, MURDOCK, YOU STAY DOWN LIKE A GOOD BOY.
...CAN'T...
LOOK, YOU BUM, YOU SAID YOU'D TAKE A DIVE AND YOU'LL TAKE A DIVE.
UH...MATT, THIS IS ONE OF THOSE TIMES WHERE YOU'RE BETTER OFF BEING BLIND.
NO OFFENSE.
WHAT? YOU THINK YOU GOT HERE TONIGHT FAIR AND SQUARE?
EVERY FIGHT YOU'VE HAD HAS BEEN FIXED. ALL THE OTHER GUYS TOOK DIVES.
NOW, LAY DOWN.
SCREW YOU.
FIVE!
SIX!
SEVEN!
Foggy didn't know it then but... I didn't need to have eyesight to know my Dad was looking right at me.

DON'T BE A SAP, MURDOCK. I'M JUST GONNA KILL YA.
Whatever deal my Dad had made, they didn't know him like I did.
GET UP, JACK! YOU CAN DO IT!
He might've thought of himself as an "uneducated pug" -- but he lived by one rule.
"The measure of a man is not in how he gets knocked down to the mat..."

"...it is in how he gets up!"
TAKE HIM, DAD!
UNBELIEVABLE! "SOUTHPAW" JACK MURDOCK HAS FLOORED CREEL WITH A HARD RIGHT TO THE JAW!


THE WINNAH BY A KNOCKOUT...BATTLING JACK MURDOCK!

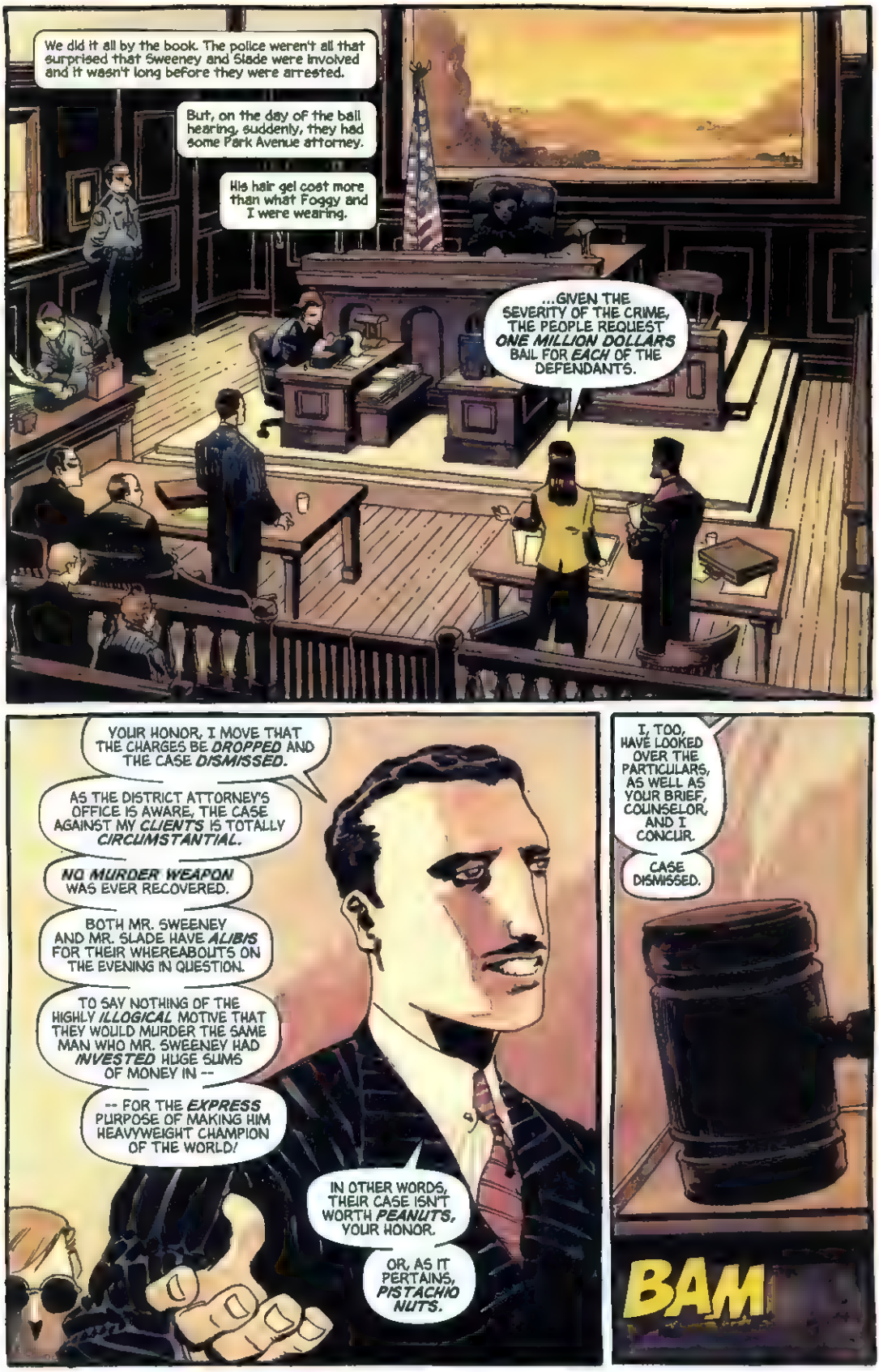

I don't think a son has ever been prouder of his father.
SO...DID YOU HEAR? I DID OKAY OUT THERE.
YEAH, I HEARD SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOU SHOWED THEM, JACK! YOU CAN DO ANYTHING IF YOU'RE NOT AFRAID.
LISTEN, BOYS, I GOTTA TAKE CARE OF SOME BUSINESS.
WHAT? I THOUGHT WE'D GO OUT AND CELEBRATE!
AND WE WILL, SON, WE WILL. BUT I STILL GOTTA SHOWER AND Y'KNOW...
YOU GUYS MEET ME BACK AT THE APARTMENT AND WE'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE.
MATT, I WANT YOU TO HAVE THIS.
DAD, IT'S YOUR ROBE. YOU'RE GOING TO NEED IT FOR THE TITLE FIGHT!
NAW, I'M THROUGH. IT'S NEVER GOING TO GET ANY BETTER THAN THIS.
I'M TELLING SWEENEY TONIGHT WE'RE DONE.
A MAN SHOULD LEAVE A PARTY WHEN IT'S ROARING.
That was the last thing my Dad ever said to me.
Then, everything changed. My Dad's heartbeat started to race as Sweeney and another man, Slade, came in.
Even over the smell of Sweeney's cheap cigar, I could hear and smell the pistachio nuts Slade was working on.
JACK.
KEEP OUT

I wish... I wish I told my Dad how much I loved him.
BLAM
WHEEOO WHEEOO WHEEO
MATT..?

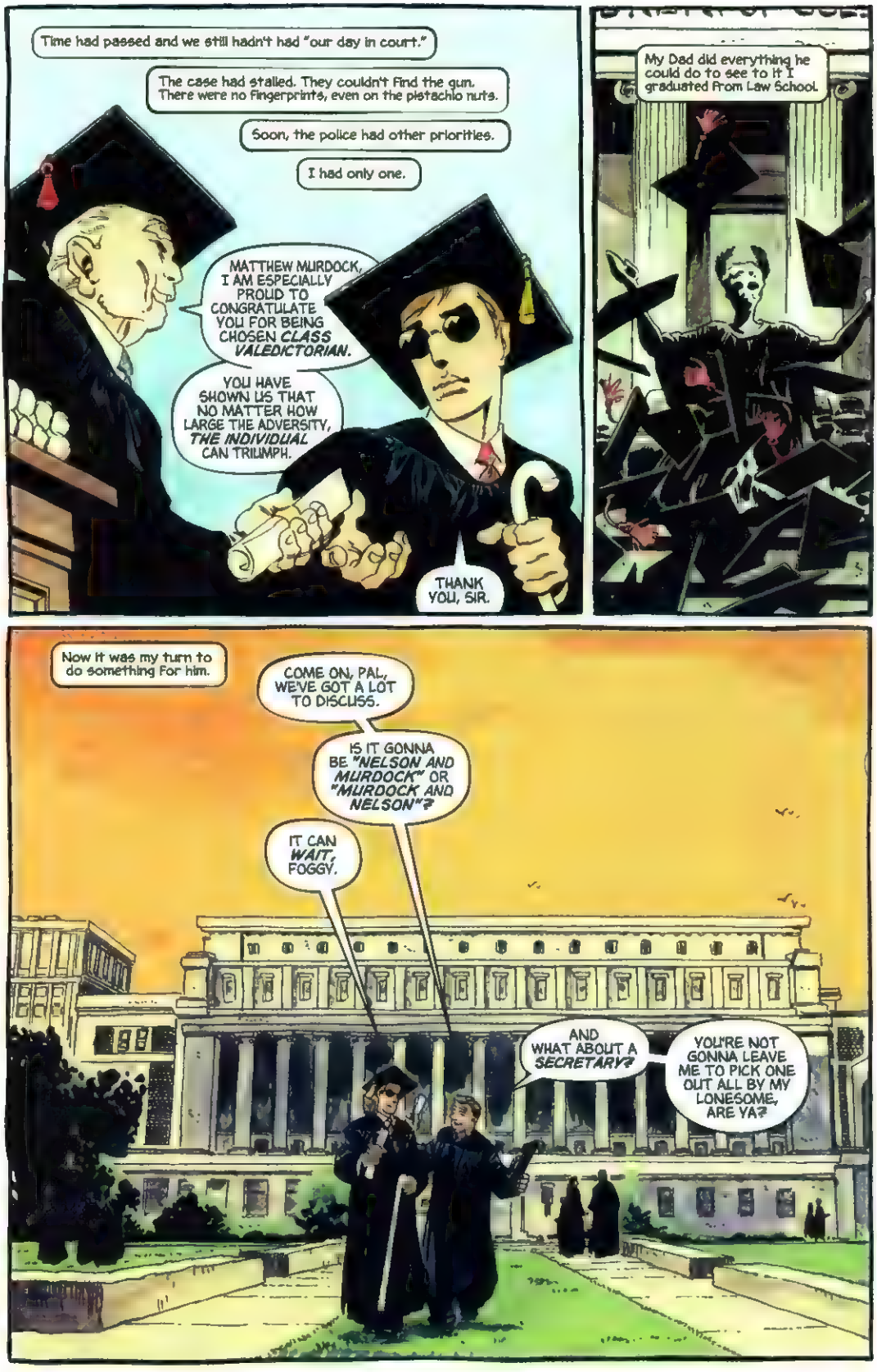
I don't know if I actually heard the shot. Maybe I dreamt it.
All I knew was that something was wrong.
WHAT THE --?
MATT!
It was like I couldn't feel my Dad's heartbeat inside me anymore.

NO!
CALM DOWN, SON. THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO FOR HIM NOW!
LET GO OF HIM! HE'S BLIND!
CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S BLIND?!
HUH... DIDN'T SEEM LIKE HE WAS BLIND.
WELL, HE IS!

It's so unimportant now, but later, I made a point to tell Foggy how I ran in the direction of the sirens just to keep my "secret."
He never pushed it further, and I never really thanked him for being there that night...
DAD...
All I really remember is the smell of Old Spice, my Dad's blood...
...and pistachio nuts...
I LOVE YOU, DAD.
DID YOU HEAR?
I LOVE YOU...


We did it all by the book. The police weren't all that surprised that Sweeney and Slade were involved and it wasn't long before they were arrested.
But, on the day of the bail hearing, suddenly, they had some Park Avenue attorney.
His hair gel cost more than what Foggy and I were wearing.
...GIVEN THE SEVERITY OF THE CRIME, THE PEOPLE REQUEST ONE MILLION DOLLARS BAIL FOR EACH OF THE DEFENDANTS.
YOUR HONOR, I MOVE THAT THE CHARGES BE DROPPED AND THE CASE DISMISSED.
AS THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IS AWARE, THE CASE AGAINST MY CLIENTS IS TOTALLY CIRCUMSTANTIAL.
NO MURDER WEAPON WAS EVER RECOVERED.
BOTH MR. SWEENEY AND MR. SLADE HAVE ALIBIS FOR THEIR WHEREABOUTS ON THE EVENING IN QUESTION.
TO SAY NOTHING OF THE HIGHLY ILLOGICAL MOTIVE THAT THEY WOULD MURDER THE SAME MAN WHO MR. SWEENEY HAD INVESTED HUGE SUMS OF MONEY IN --
-- FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF MAKING HIM HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORLD!
IN OTHER WORDS, THEIR CASE ISN'T WORTH PEANUTS, YOUR HONOR.
OR, AS IT PERTAINS, PISTACHIO NUTS.
I, TOO, HAVE LOOKED OVER THE PARTICULARS, AS WELL AS YOUR BRIEF, COUNSELOR, AND I CONCUR.
CASE DISMISSED.
BAM

YOUR HONOR -- THIS IS A CAPITAL OFFENSE!
AND WHEN YOU'VE DONE YOUR HOMEWORK A LOT BETTER, YOU ARE WELCOME TO REFILE CHARGES.
NO! THIS IS WRONG!
WHAT DID THEY DO, JUDGE, BUY YOU OFF?!
BAM BAM BAM
MR. MURDOCK, YOU ARE DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO BEING HELD IN CONTEMPT.
MATT, MATT, I KNOW YOU'RE UPSET --
-- BUT THAT'S A JUDGE YOU'RE TALKING TO!
LET THIS BE A LESSON TO YA, KID.
DON'T STEP INTO THE RING, UNLESS YOU KNOW YOU'RE GONNA WIN.
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, MATT. WE'LL GET OUR DAY IN COURT, YOU'LL SEE.


Time had passed and we still hadn't had "our day in court."
The case had stalled. They couldn't find the gun. There were no fingerprints, even on the pistachio nuts.
Soon, the police had other priorities.
I had only one.
MATTHEW MURDOCK, I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD TO CONGRATULATE YOU FOR BEING CHOSEN CLASS VALEDICTORIAN.
YOU HAVE SHOWN US THAT NO MATTER HOW LARGE THE ADVERSITY, THE INDIVIDUAL CAN TRIUMPH.
THANK YOU, SIR.
My Dad did everything he could do to see to it I graduated from Law School.
Now it was my turn to do something for him.
COME ON, PAL, WE'VE GOT A LOT TO DISCUSS.
IS IT GONNA BE "NELSON AND MURDOCK" OR "MURDOCK AND NELSON"?
IT CAN WAIT, FOGGY.
AND WHAT ABOUT A SECRETARY?
YOU'RE NOT GONNA LEAVE ME TO PICK ONE OUT ALL BY MY LONESOME, ARE YA?

Back at the apartment, just opening his old footlocker after what had happened was overwhelming.
SPORTS
SPORTS
The smells of aftershave and talcum powder were as fresh as if he were standing there with me.
I found his robe. His boxing shoes. Even his under gloves.
I sat in his chair and I could almost feel his hand on my shoulder telling me I was going to amount to something special.
I must have been out of my mind. I worked through the night -- maybe into the next day and night -- sewing.

I had read about The Fantastic Four and Spider-Man, but they weren't going to get involved in my problems.
I had promised my Dad I would never be an "uneducated pug" like him. He wanted me to be a lawyer and I made good on that.
But it wasn't enough. I had seen how the law -- which I still steadfastly believed in -- wasn't always the same as justice.

Battling Jack Murdock raised me to be a fighter.
And now it was time to step into the ring...
LOEB
SALE
2001

Book Two:
THE MEASURE OF A MAN
Dear Karen,
I am writing you again even though I know you are gone.
My hope is by remembering the past, I can help myself in the present.
DAREDEVIL.
HAHA HAHAHA
TS 01

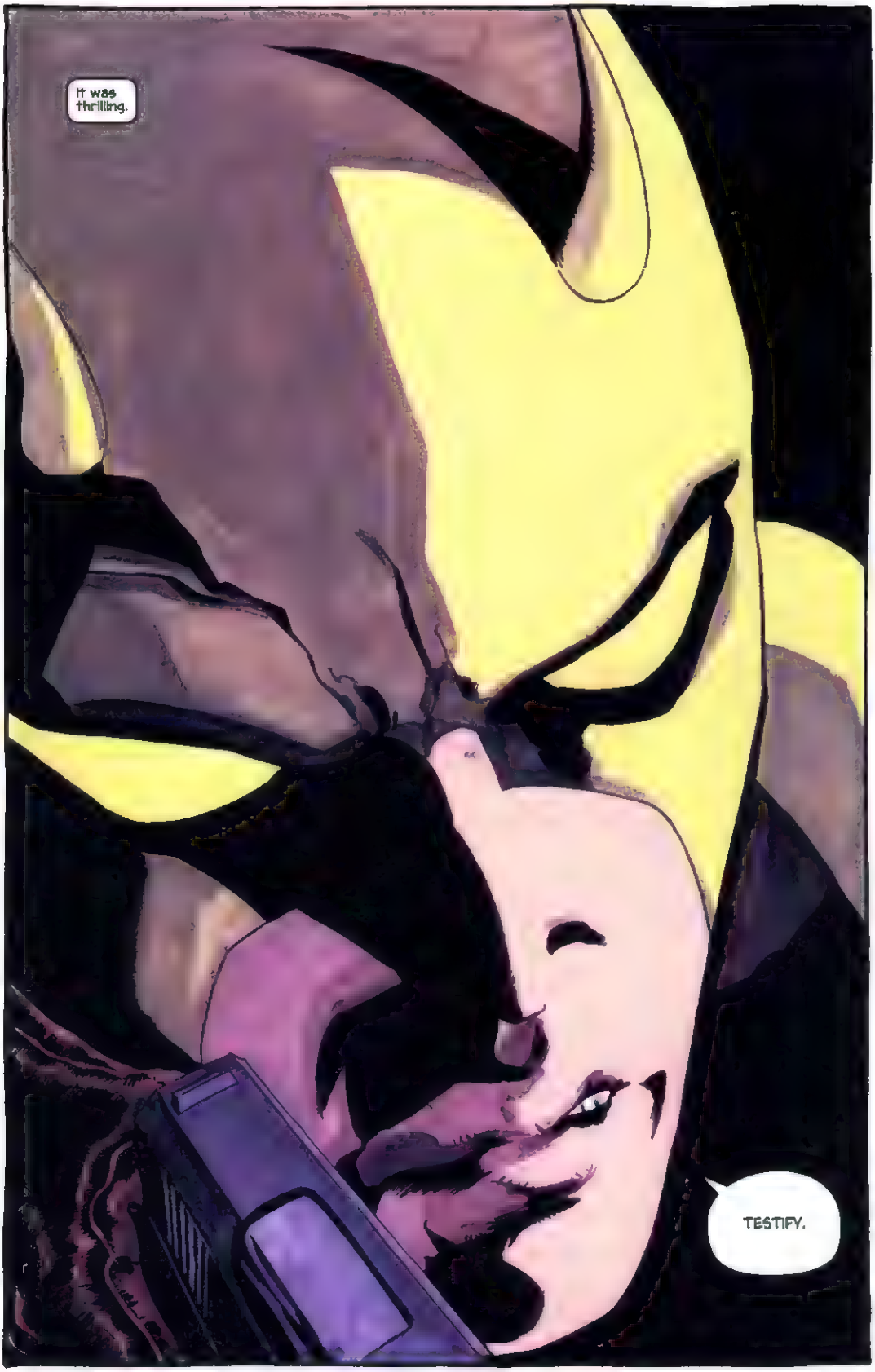
When I was a kid, the gang in the neighborhood would taunt me. They wanted me to fight back and thought I was scared.
They called me "Daredevil."
And they laughed at me.
PRANG!
NOT EXACTLY --
-- THE RESPONSE --
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
FAP
-- I WAS LOOKING FOR!
I wasn't scared.
I made a promise to my Father that I wouldn't solve things with my fists.
Like he did.
The greatest guy in the world and he didn't want me to grow up to be like him.

I never really thought about it until now, but my Dad and I were quite the pair.
WHERE IS "THE FIXER"?
WHOA!
He tried to keep secret what he was really doing with The Fixer, I guess, to protect me.
OKAY! OKAY! PUT ME DOWN!
HE'S COMIN' HERE ANY MINUTE.
CRASH!
And I tried to keep secret all my training, I guess, to protect him.

I was so sure he'd be angry that I was keeping fit, learning to fight, studying his every move in the ring --
WHO IS THIS BLIM, SLADE?
BLAM!
BLAM! BLAM!
DUNNO. LOOKS LIKE SOME KINDA WRESTLER IN THAT GET-UP, FIXER.
-- I just kept letting him believe that I was like any other blind kid.
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
THEN, HE'S A DEAD WRESTLER.
And my Dad kept winning fights he had to have known were fixed.

But, he was too proud to admit what he had done.
YOU HAVE TO ANSWER FOR BATTLING JACK MURDOCK.
BATTLING JACK --?
NOW, THAT'S A NAME THAT AIN'T TOO HEALTHY TO MENTION AROUND HERE.
Afraid of what I would think of him.
TOK
OW!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? HAVE ME FIXED?
UHN!
BIF!
A father and son afraid of each other.

IS *THIS* THE GUN YOU USED TO SHOOT MURDOCK IN THE BACK?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' --
I went looking for my Dad's killers and found myself back in the gym where he had lived his life.
YOU *CAN'T* LIE TO ME.
I'LL *KNOW.*
WAK!
When I punched Slade I could hear my Dad's glove hitting the heavy bag.
THEY NEVER FOUND THE MURDER WEAPON. JUST *PISTACHIO NUTS.*
YOUR PISTACHIO NUTS.
When Slade went down, it Felt like my Dad had knocked him to the canvas.


It was thrilling.
TESTIFY.

My Dad would talk about stepping into the ring.
SUBWAY
It was more than the crowd cheering or booing that would get him juiced.
It was all about knowing that on any given night, no matter how unevenly matched, two men go in.
Only one comes out a winner.

I had trailed The Fixer For three city blocks.
NAW.
SHUFFS
CAN'T BE.
WHAT'S WITH YOU --
SHUFFS
-- ANYWAY?!
The smell of that cheap cigar drew a line in my head right to him.

The coins in his pockets rattled like cymbals crashing.
ALL THIS OVER --
HUFFF
-- BATTLING JACK?
HE WAS A BUM!
HUFFF
HUFFF
HUFFF
HSSSS
IS THAT WHY YOU HAD HIM KILLED?
TOK
I could taste his salty sweat without even touching him.
The awful smell of his bladder giving out as he wet himself.
It was like I was inside this horrible man.
OKAY, WHAT'DYA WANT? YOU --
HUFFF
-- WANT MONEY?
HUFFF

And then...I knew... maybe before he did... his heart wasn't going to make it.
I GOT... WHEEZE MONEY...
I remember thinking, "Don't fall down -- not before I get to hit you."
HACK
"You're not going to take a dive, Mister."
"Not like you wanted my Dad to."

CHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGA
TOK
TOK
TOK
CHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGA
FAP
TOK

ACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGA CHUGACHUGACHUG
Even over the roar of the subway, I could tell.
The Fixer was dead.

CHUGACHUGACHUGA
Karen. You were the first one to call me "The Man Without Fear".
I liked that -- even reveled in it.
CHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGACHUGA
I was -- am -- will always be -- so much like my Dad.

YOU THERE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING DOWN HERE?!
THIS MAN IS DEAD. HEART ATTACK.
HE'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF BATTLING JACK MURDOCK.
NOW, IF ONE OF YOU OFFICERS WILL FOLLOW ME OVER TO *FOGWELL'S GYM* --
-- WE'LL FIND A *SECOND* MAN, SLADE, WHO ACTUALLY PULLED THE TRIGGER.
AND, I'M WILLING TO BET, THE MURDER WEAPON.
BATTLIN' JACK? I REMEMBER HIM. HE COULD'VE BEEN *THE CHAMP.*
SO... WHO ARE *YOU* SUPPOSED TO BE?
When I was a kid, the gang in the neighborhood would taunt me. They wanted me to fight back and thought I was scared.

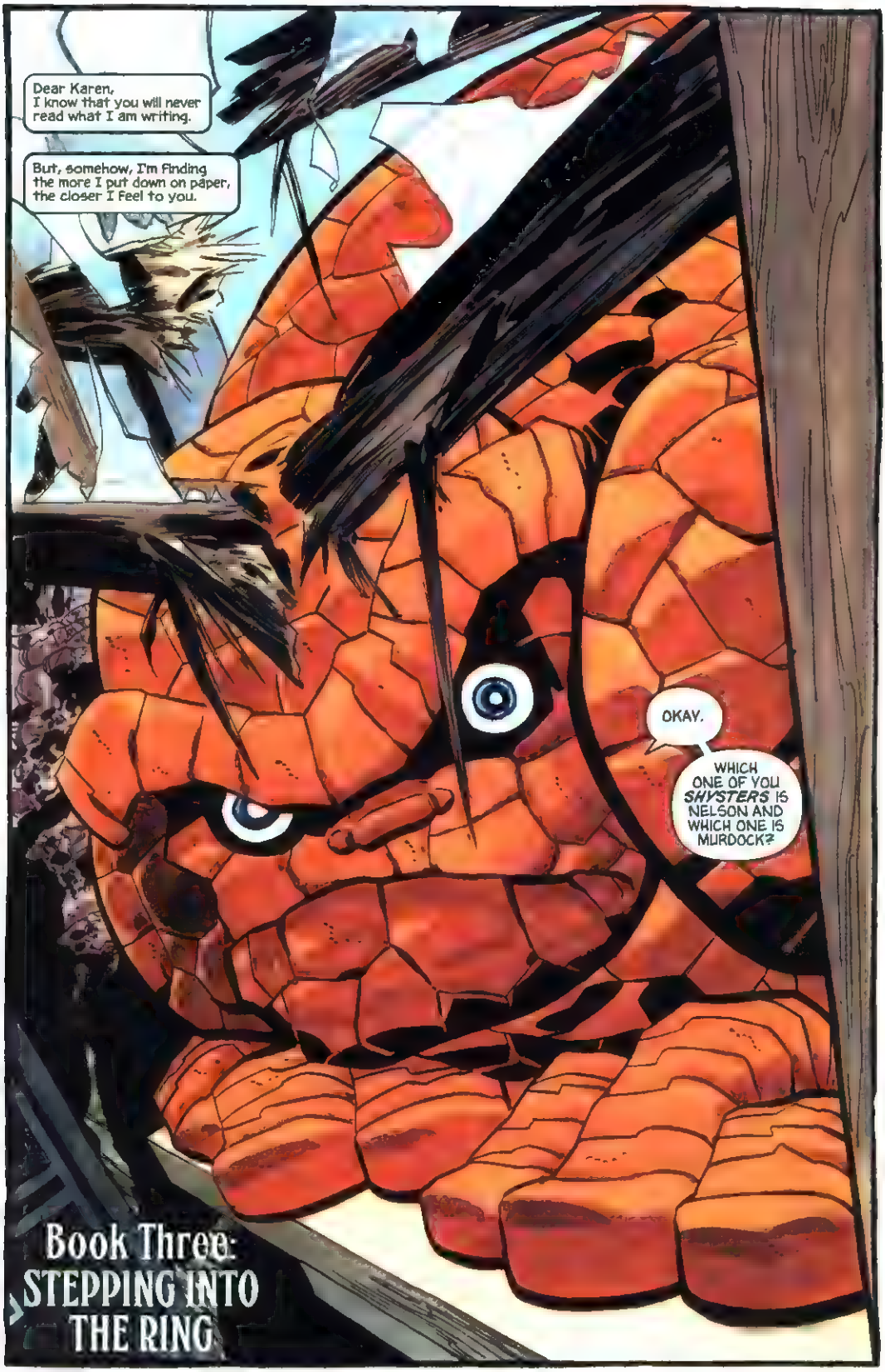
DAREDEVIL.
They weren't laughing any more.

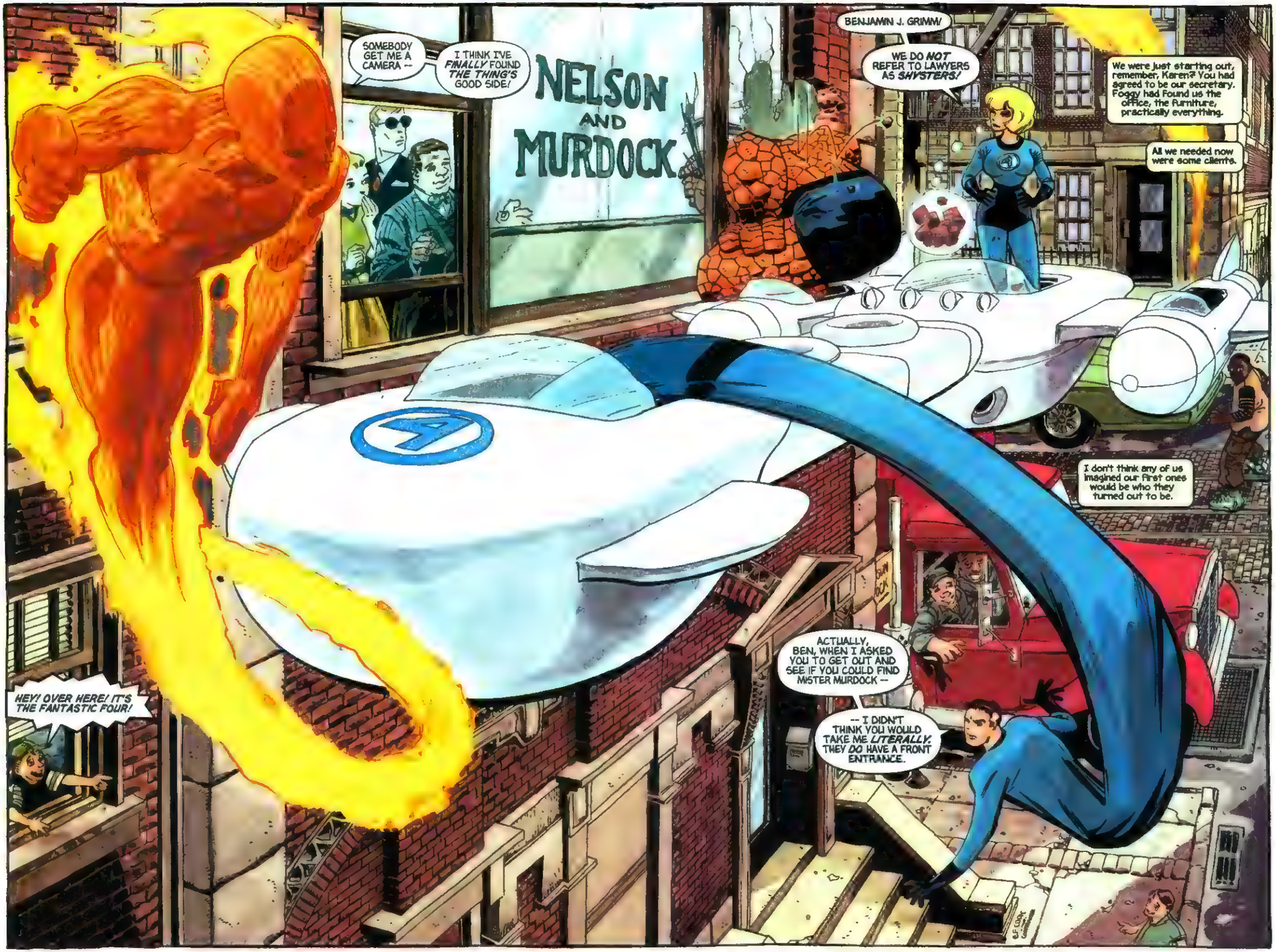
True to his word, Foggy set out to find us a secretary for the law office. He smiles about it now, but back then...
NELSON and MURDOCK
TOP OF YOUR CLASS AT COLUMBIA. WE LIKE THAT.
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF, MISTER KIM?
WELL...I CAN'T WORK MONDAYS, THURSDAYS, AND *EVERY OTHER* FRIDAY -- IS THAT A PROBLEM?
I CHAIN SMOKE.
IS THAT A PROBLEM?
PROJECTILE VOMITING.
NOW, *THAT'S* SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE EVERY DAY.
WINSTON! WHEN I GET YOU HOME, YOU'RE GETTING SUCH A BEATING!

MISTER MURDOCK..?
HE'S NOT HERE.
I'M SORRY... IT'S JUST...THE AGENCY SENT ME OVER FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH *MURDOCK & NELSON* AND --
THAT'S *NELSON* AND MURDOCK.
LOOK, IF YOU'LL JUST LEAVE YOUR RESUME, I'M SURE SOMEONE WILL CONTACT YOU --
LONG DAY, HUH?
THEY'RE *ALL* LONG DAYS, THAT'S THE NATURE OF THE JOB.
I KNOW.
YOU...
...DO?

"FOGGY."
THAT'S AN UNUSUAL NAME.
I'M AN UNUSUAL GUY.
NELSON AND MURDOCK ATTORNEYS AT LAW
DO YOU KNOW WHEN MISTER MURDOCK WILL BE GETTING BACK?
SOON, I HOPE.
THERE IS SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT "MISTER MURDOCK."
YOU SEE, HE'S --
PRIVATE
-- HERE!
Heh.
MATT, THERE'S SOMEBODY YOU'VE JUST GOTTA MEET.

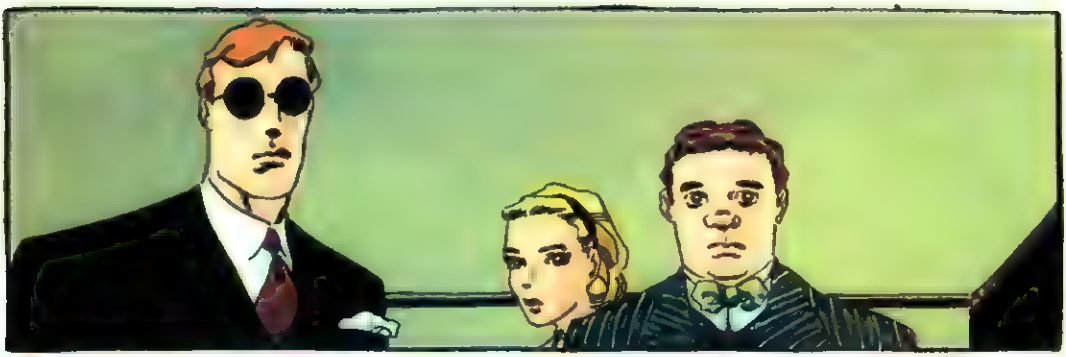
THIS IS MISS KAREN PAGE.
SHE'S GONNA BE OUR NEW SECRETARY!
OH.
DOES THAT MEAN I GOT THE JOB?
...And I didn't have to have eyesight to know I was looking at the most beautiful woman in the world...
LOEB SALE 2001


Dear Karen,
I know that you will never read what I am writing.
But, somehow, I'm finding the more I put down on paper, the closer I feel to you.
OKAY.
WHICH ONE OF YOU SHYSTERS IS NELSON AND WHICH ONE IS MURDOCK?
Book Three:
STEPPING INTO THE RING


SOMEBODY GET ME A CAMERA --
I THINK I'VE FINALLY FOUND THE THING'S GOOD SIDE!
NELSON AND MURDOCK
BENJAMIN J. GRIMM!
WE DO NOT REFER TO LAWYERS AS SHYSTERS!
We were just starting out, remember, Karen? You had agreed to be our secretary. Foggy had found us the office, the furniture, practically everything.
All we needed now were some clients.
I don't think any of us imagined our first ones would be who they turned out to be.
ACTUALLY, BEN, WHEN I ASKED YOU TO GET OUT AND SEE IF YOU COULD FIND MISTER MURDOCK --
-- I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD TAKE ME LITERALLY. THEY DO HAVE A FRONT ENTRANCE.
HEY! OVER HERE! IT'S THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

I couldn't believe how loud the Thing's heartbeat was. It made him seem even larger and I could tell he was huge.
I admit, I actually entertained the idea they had discovered my secret.
That I was New York's newest super-hero, Daredevil.
That I mattered to them...
I'M MATT MURDOCK.
YES, SIR, MISTER, UH, THING, SIR, THAT IS MATT MURDOCK.
THE BLIND GUY! YER KIDDIN' ME, RIGHT?
BEN!
MISTER MURDOCK WAS AT THE TOP OF HIS CLASS AT COLUMBIA LAW WHERE A NUMBER OF MY CLOSE ASSOCIATES RECOMMENDED HIM HIGHLY.
IT'S... "MATT."
HOW'S THAT, SON?
I'D PREFER TO BE CALLED "MATT."
"MISTER MURDOCK" SOUNDS SO... "MISTER MURDOCK."
Thinking back on it now, that was my father talking. But, somehow, it seemed like the right thing to say at the time.
REED. WE HIRIN' THESE BUMS, OR WHAT?

MATT. IF YOU'RE OPEN TO IT, WE'VE GOT SOME LEGAL WORK THAT NEEDS ATTENDING.
THE LEASE ON THE BAXTER BUILDING, PATENTS, THAT SORT OF THING?
WE'D BE HAPPY TO. AND ANYTHING ELSE YOU MIGHT WANT TO BRING US, MISTER RICHARDS.
FINE, THEN. DRAW UP A RETAINER AGREEMENT AND BE SURE TO INCLUDE THE COST OF REPAIRING YOUR WINDOW AND WALL.
WE WILL, SIR.
NELSON MURDOCK
OH, AND MATT.
YES, SIR?
IT'S "REED."

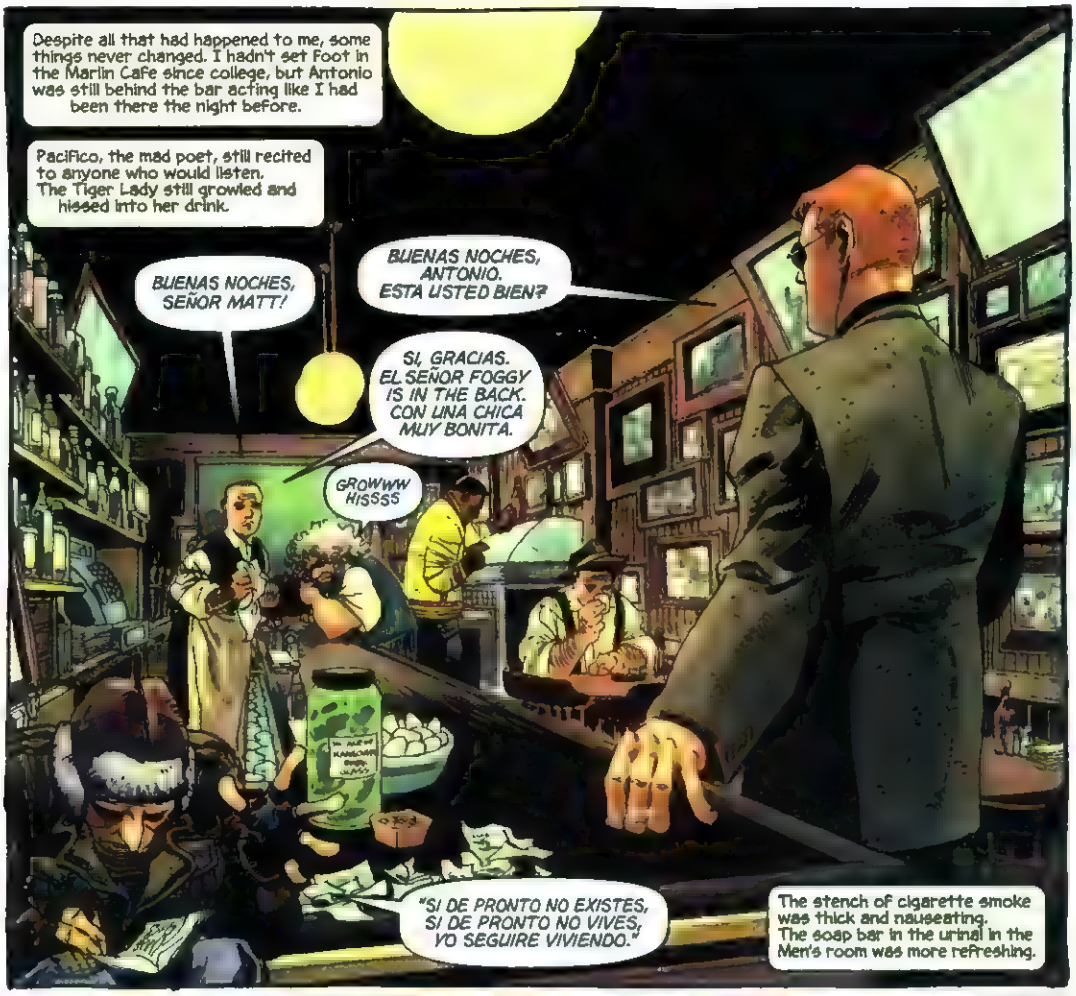


WE'VE GOT OUR FIRST CLIENTS! WE'VE GOT OUR FIRST CLIENTS!
MISTER NELSON!
IT'S "FOGGY," KAREN.
"MISTER NELSON SOUNDS SO... MISTER NELSON!"
HA! CLASSIC MATT! I ALMOST WET MY PANTS! TELLING THE REED RICHARDS WHAT TO CALL HIM!

PLEASE DON'T MAKE FUN OF MISTER MURDOCK.
I THINK WE SHOULD BE VERY PROUD OF WHAT HE DID TODAY.
When you said that, your heart skipped a beat. What you didn't know was that mine did as well.

HEY, I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY CALL HIM, AS LONG AS THEIR CHECK CLEARS!
KAREN, WE'VE GOT TO GO OUT AND CELEBRATE. DRINKS TONIGHT AT THE MARLIN CAFE.
THE...MARLIN? FOGGY, IF KAREN IS GOING TO JOIN US, SHOULDN'T WE FIND SOME PLACE --
-- C'MON! OUR OLD COLLEGE WATERING HOLE? SHE'LL LOVE IT!
In the end, it wasn't worth arguing about. The way you said, "I think we should be very proud of what he did today" --
-- I forgot all about the Fantastic Four and what they thought.
On that day, I mattered to you.

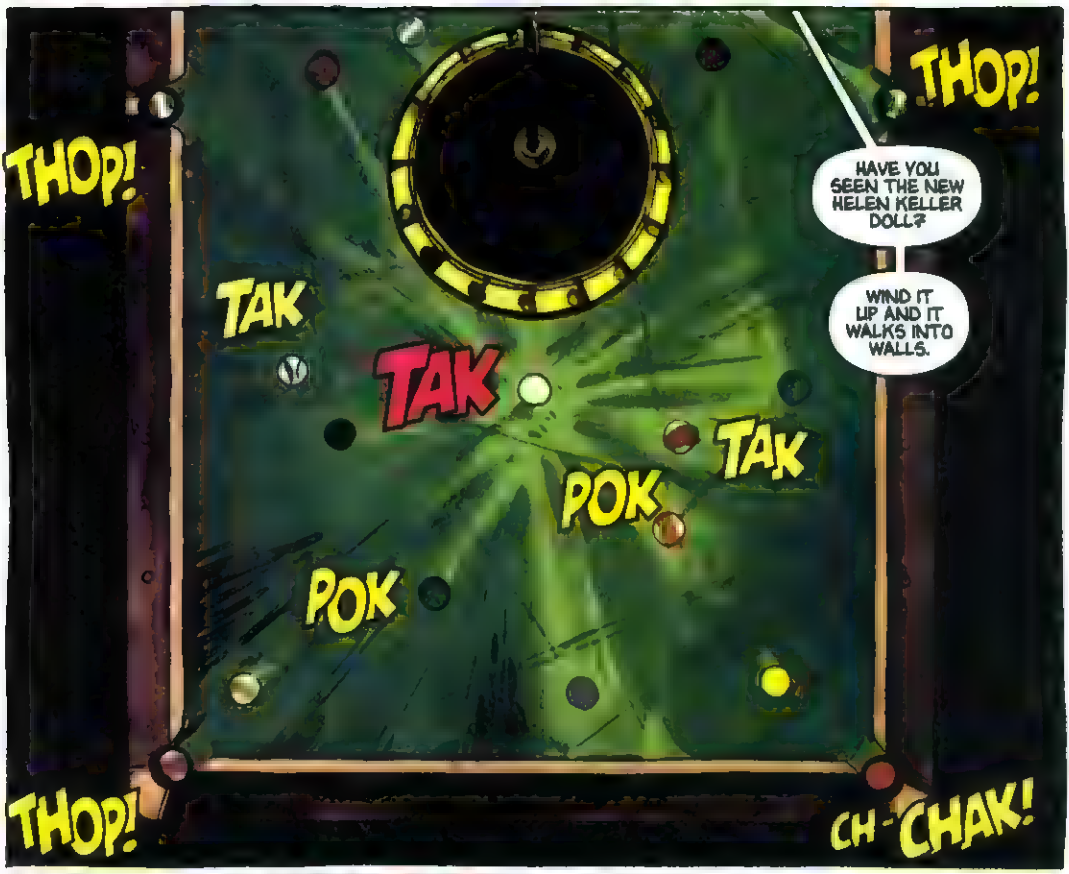
I could've taken the subway uptown. Or the bus. Or a taxi.
But, with you on my mind, I thought I could Fly.
And I thought about Thor and Iron Man and heroes like that who really could fly and I laughed to think people now might use my name in the same sentence.
It was almost surreal. Hiding my costume. Changing in the shadows.
I had even thought ahead to remove my mask last in case someone should see me.
A grown man taking off his clothes in an alley. I thought that was against the law.


Despite all that had happened to me, some things never changed. I hadn't set foot in the Marlin Cafe since college, but Antonio was still behind the bar acting like I had been there the night before.
Pacifico, the mad poet, still recited to anyone who would listen. The Tiger Lady still growled and hissed into her drink.
BUENAS NOCHES, SEÑOR MATT!
BUENAS NOCHES, ANTONIO. ESTA USTED BIEN?
SI, GRACIAS. EL SEÑOR FOGGY IS IN THE BACK. CON UNA CHICA MUY BONITA.
GROWWW HISSSS
"SI DE PRONTO NO EXISTES, SI DE PRONTO NO VIVES, YO SEGUIRE VIVIENDO."
The stench of cigarette smoke was thick and nauseating. The soap bar in the urinal in the Men's room was more refreshing.

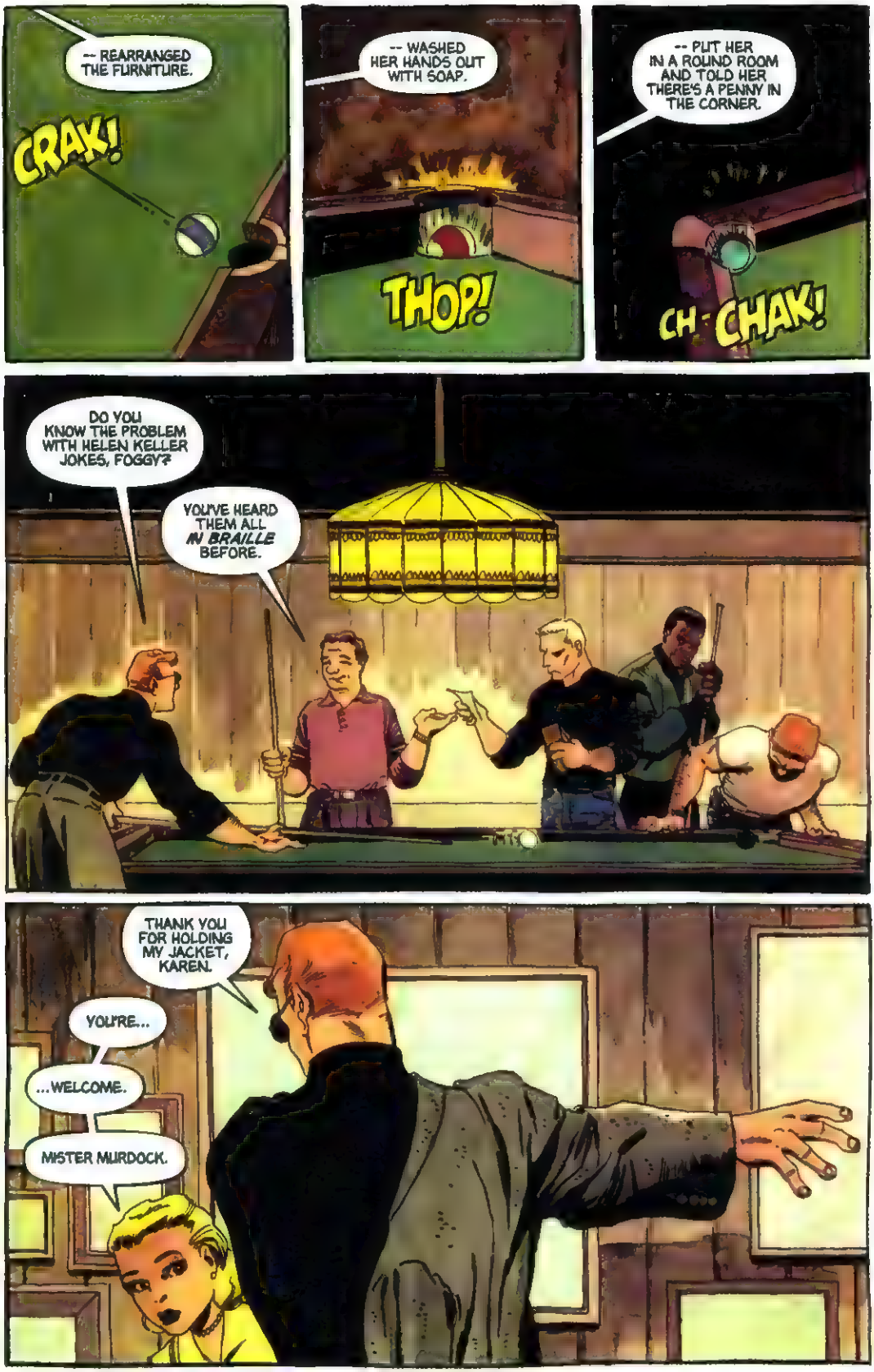
MATT! MATT! GET IN HERE!
MISTER MURDOCK, DO YOU NEED ANY HELP?
But one thing had changed about the place. I could tell you were wearing "Charlie".
They don't make that perfume anymore.
It's gone now...

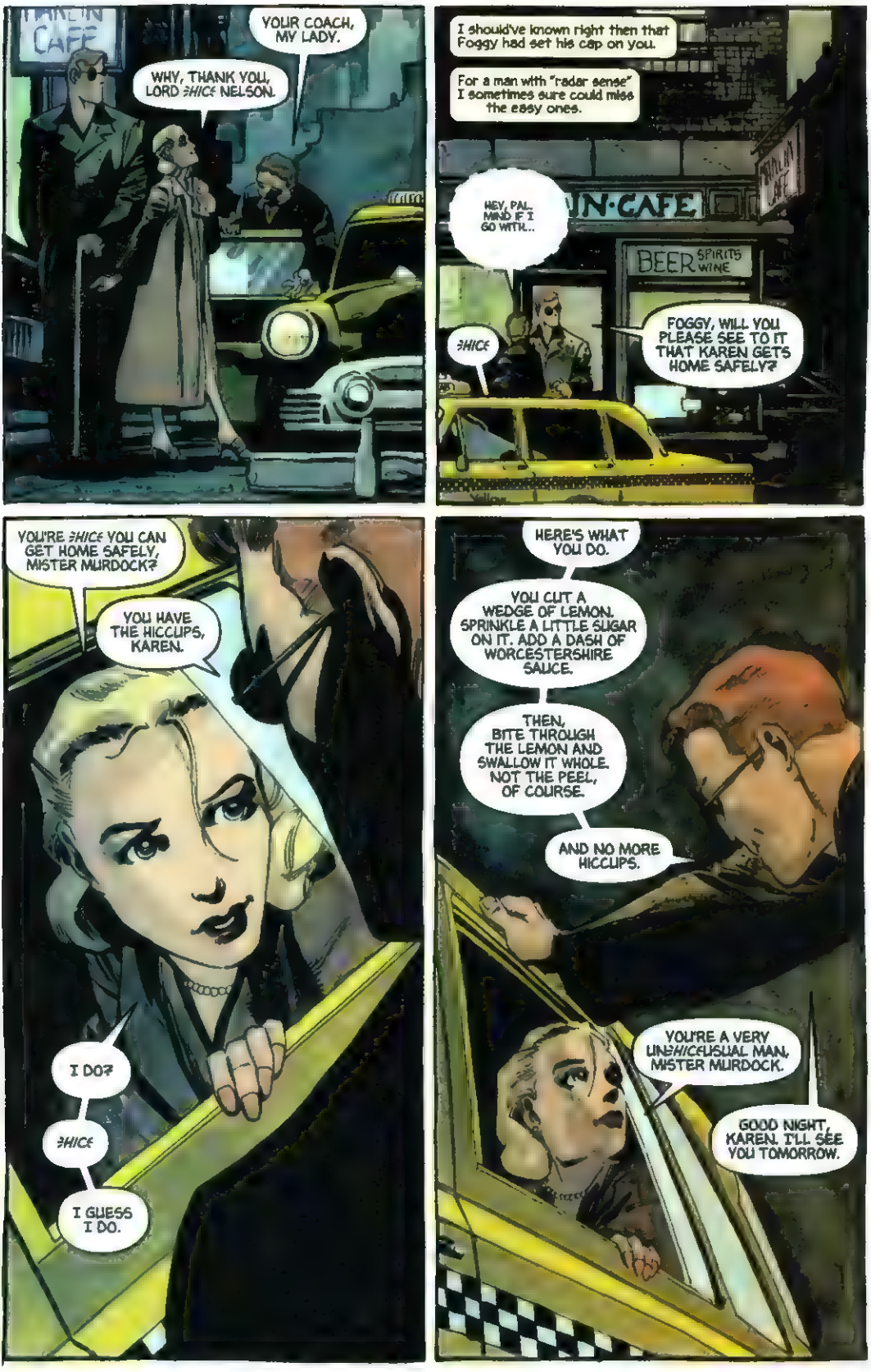
THAT'S THE GUY WE BEEN WAITING FOR?
BIG JOKE, FAT BOY. NOW TAKE HELEN KELLER HERE OUTSIDE AND GIVE US BACK THE TABLE.
HEY, DID YA HEAR HOW HELEN KELLER BURNED HER FINGERS?
SHE WAS TRYING TO READ THE WAFFLE IRON!
DON'T LET THEM BOTHER YOU, MISTER MURDOCK.
ARE THEY BOTHERING YOU, KAREN?
WHY...NO. BUT, THEY'VE SAID SUCH HORRIBLE THINGS --
-- WOULD YOU MIND HOLDING MY JACKET?
EXCUSE ME?
MY JACKET. I COULD HANG IT ON THE BACK OF THE STOOL IF YOU'D PREFER.
I...NO...THAT IS, I WOULDN'T MIND. YOU'RE NOT REALLY GOING TO PLAY THEM, ARE YOU?
FIVE DOLLARS A BALL, BOYS?
RACK 'EM, FOGGY.

WHY DOES HELEN KELLER PLAY THE PIANO WITH ONE HAND?
SHE SINGS WITH THE OTHER.


THOP!
THOP!
TAK
TAK
TAK
POK
POK
HAVE YOU SEEN THE NEW HELEN KELLER DOLL?
WIND IT UP AND IT WALKS INTO WALLS.
THOP!
CH-CHAK!

MISTER NELSON — HOW DOES HE...?
HE JUST CAN, KAREN. JUST LIKE YOU CAN START CALLING ME "FOGGY" ANY TIME YOU WANT.
WHAT DID HELEN KELLER'S PARENTS DO TO PUNISH HER?


-- REARRANGED THE FURNITURE.
CRAK!
-- WASHED HER HANDS OUT WITH SOAP.
THOP!
-- PUT HER IN A ROUND ROOM AND TOLD HER THERE'S A PENNY IN THE CORNER.
CH-CHAK!
DO YOU KNOW THE PROBLEM WITH HELEN KELLER JOKES, FOGGY?
YOU'VE HEARD THEM ALL *IN BRAILLE* BEFORE.
THANK YOU FOR HOLDING MY JACKET, KAREN.
YOU'RE...
...WELCOME.
MISTER MURDOCK.


CAFE
YOUR COACH, MY LADY.
WHY, THANK YOU, LORD HICK NELSON.
I should've known right then that Foggy had set his cap on you.
For a man with "radar sense" I sometimes sure could miss the easy ones.
HEY, PAL. MIND IF I GO WITH...
HICK
FOGGY, WILL YOU PLEASE SEE TO IT THAT KAREN GETS HOME SAFELY?
BEER SPIRITS WINE
YOU'RE HICK YOU CAN GET HOME SAFELY, MISTER MURDOCK?
YOU HAVE THE HICCUPS, KAREN.
I DO?
HICK
I GUESS I DO.
HERE'S WHAT YOU DO.
YOU CUT A WEDGE OF LEMON. SPRINKLE A LITTLE SUGAR ON IT. ADD A DASH OF WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE.
THEN, BITE THROUGH THE LEMON AND SWALLOW IT WHOLE. NOT THE PEEL, OF COURSE.
AND NO MORE HICCUPS.
YOU'RE A VERY UNHICCUSUAL MAN, MISTER MURDOCK.
GOOD NIGHT, KAREN. I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW.

LET'S NOT DO THIS HERE ON THE STREET.
THREE COLLEGE KIDS BEATING ON A *BLIND* MAN.
YOU'LL BE ON THE ELEVEN O'CLOCK NEWS.
SUIT YOURSELF.
YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT *I* THINK, *"HELEN"*?
NOT REALLY.
I THINK YOU AREN'T *REALLY* BLIND AND YOU AND YOUR FAT FRIEND HUSTLED US.
THEN, YOU'RE MISTAKEN.
AT LEAST ABOUT THE *"MY NOT BEING BLIND"* PART.
AND I *SHOULD* FEEL BAD ABOUT THE *"HUSTLING YOU"* PART.
BUT, I DON'T LIKE *HELEN KELLER* JOKES.
OR THE PEOPLE WHO TELL THEM.

BRAK!
My father would talk about never leading with your left.
FAP
BDIF
DONK
Since he was a Southpaw, it meant his left-handed punch was his best stuff.

HA! MISSED! YOU GOTTA BE BLIND!
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
THUP
GURK
If you lead with your left, he would drill into me, your opponent will know what you have and you lose your advantage.
I guess that's why I didn't tell you right away how I felt about you.

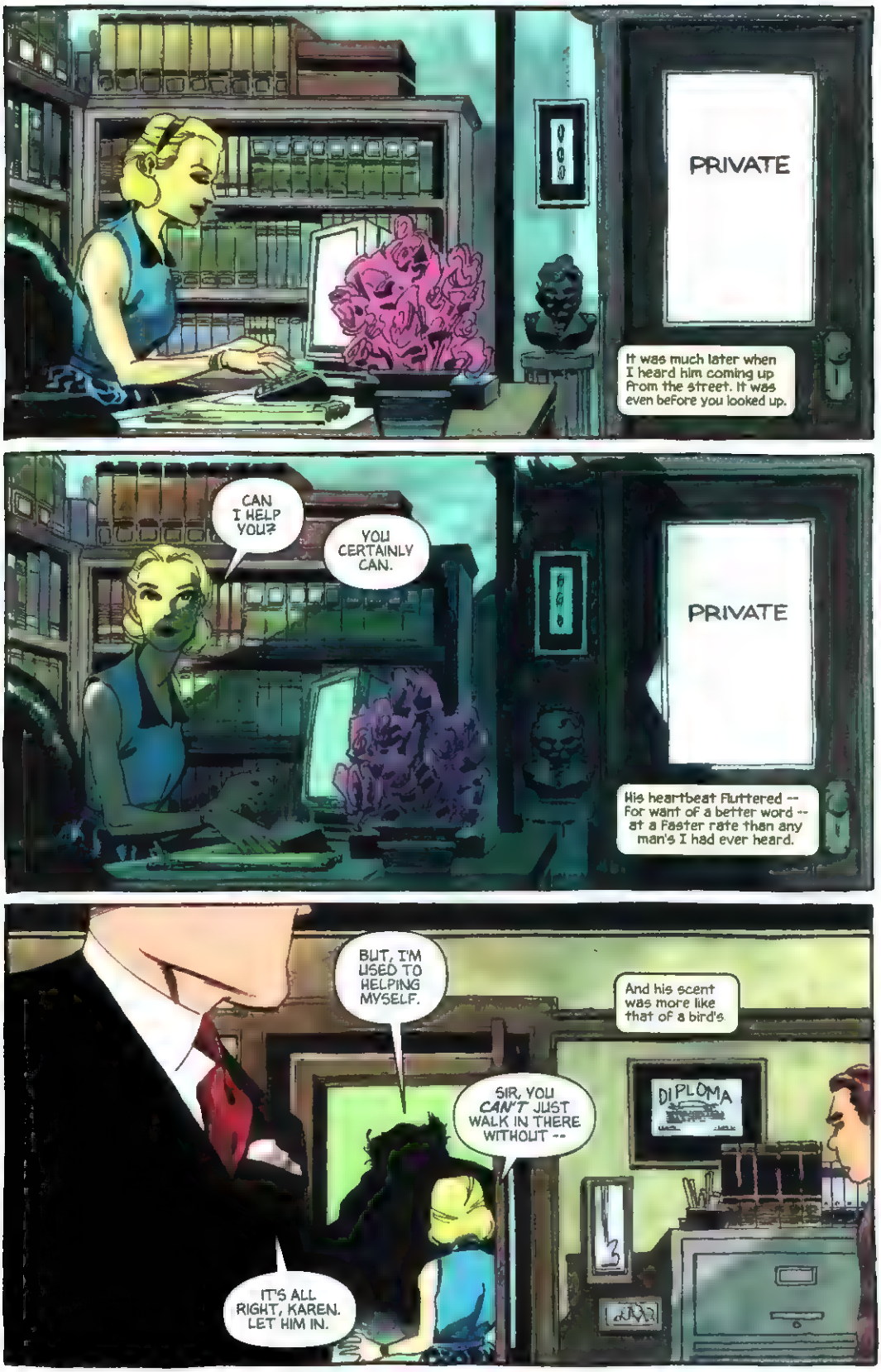
I miss my Father, Karen. Some days, I admit, I miss him even more than I miss you. I hope you can understand that. I loved you both in different ways and both so very much.
WHAT DO YOU WANT, MURDOCK?
YOU'RE ALREADY LOOKING AT A *DEAD* MAN.
WHAT THE HELL MORE COULD YOU POSSIBLY WANT?
SLADE
It was an election year and the District Attorney wanted to make an example of someone to show he was tough on crime.
Slade, the man who killed my Father, was swiftly given the death penalty.
YOU WANT ME TO SAY THAT I'M SORRY?
WELL, I'M NOT.
YOUR FATHER WAS A *BUM*.
HE *AGREED* TO TAKE A DIVE AND THEN, HE BACKED OUT ON IT.
IN *MY* BUSINESS, YOU DON'T DO THAT.
YOU SHOULDA *SEEN* IT, KID. I PUT THE GUN UP TO THE BACK OF YOUR OLD MAN'S HEAD AND BLEW HIS BRAINS OUT.
OH.
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU *CAN'T* SEE.

I WANT TO KNOW WHO HIRED YOU.
YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT. IT WAS SWEENEY. "THE FIXER."
I TESTIFIED AGAINST HIM AND EVERYTHING, FOR ALL THE GOOD IT DID ME.
NO. I WANT TO KNOW WHO SWEENEY WORKED FOR.
WHO FIXED THINGS FOR THE FIXER?
OH, NO. YOU AIN'T GETTIN' THAT FROM ME.
WHY NOT? YOU ALREADY SAID I WAS LOOKING AT A DEAD MAN.
MAYBE, I COULD GET YOUR SENTENCE COMMUTED OR, AT LEAST, POSTPONED PENDING --
I SAID, "NO."
WHY?
'CAUSE I GOT KIDS, YOU LITTLE STRUNZ'!
YOU GET IT NOW?
OR ARE YOU AS DEAF AS YOU ARE BLIND?

HEY, MURDOCK.
THERE *IS* SOMETHING YOU CAN DO FOR ME THOUGH.
NEXT TIME YOU COME AND SEE ME?
BRING ME SOME OF THEM *PISTACHIO NUTS.*
THEY DON'T HAVE THEM HERE. CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?!
PISTACHIO NUTS...!

No matter what else was going on, I could always return to the work. When I was dealing with the law, the world had order. Things made sense. Things got done.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, MISTER NELSON.
WHO TO TURN TO -- WHO I CAN TRUST?
YOU CAN TRUST US, GRACE.
THANK YOU.
HERE COMES MATT NOW.
KAREN.
MISTER MURDOCK.
MATT, I WANT YOU TO MEET GRACE --
-- NO LAST NAMES, PLEASE. I KNOW ALL ABOUT "ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGE" -- BUT NOT NOW.
NOT YET.

AS I WAS TELLING MISTER NELSON, I DON'T LIVE IN NEW YORK CITY.
MY HUSBAND -- WAS A GOOD MAN. AN *IMPORTANT* MAN.
AND I DID SOME THINGS -- SOME *TERRIBLE* THINGS. BUT I DID THEM TO PROTECT *HIM.*
AND NOW SOMEONE HAS FOUND OUT.
HE'S THREATENED TO EXPOSE ME -- TO SEND ME TO *JAIL* IF I DON'T PAY HIM MONEY.
CAN YOU TELL US WHO THIS PERSON IS?
I -- I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE.
HE'LL FIND ME.
THAT'S WHAT HE DOES!
SO.
HOW'S THE *REST* OF YOUR DAY BEEN GOING?
SHE WAS *LYING.* I DON'T KNOW ABOUT WHAT, BUT SHE WAS LYING ABOUT SOMETHING.
HOW CAN YOU --? I KNOW, I KNOW, YOU JUST *CAN.* RIGHT, PARTNER?
SLAM!


PRIVATE
It was much later when I heard him coming up from the street. It was even before you looked up.
CAN I HELP YOU?
YOU CERTAINLY CAN.
PRIVATE
His heartbeat fluttered -- for want of a better word -- at a faster rate than any man's I had ever heard.
BUT, I'M USED TO HELPING MYSELF.
And his scent was more like that of a bird's
DIPLOMA
SIR, YOU CAN'T JUST WALK IN THERE WITHOUT --
IT'S ALL RIGHT, KAREN. LET HIM IN.

GOOD AFTERNOON, GENTLEMEN.
I BELIEVE IN COMING STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.
A YOUNG WOMAN CAME TO SEE YOU THIS AFTERNOON AND, NO DOUBT, TOLD YOU SOME *SCURRILOUS* AND *LIBELOUS* THINGS ABOUT ME.
AND YOU ARE...?
MY REAL NAME IS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE, ONLY THAT MY BUSINESS ASSOCIATES REFER TO ME AS...
...THE OWL.
AND I WISH TO EMPLOY YOUR SERVICES.
LOEB SALE 2001

Dear Karen,
There is so much I wanted to tell you. So many adventures I thought we would share.
When you're young, you think you're going to live forever.
IS THAT THE BEST YOU'VE GOT?
Book Four:
NEVER LEAD WITH YOUR LEFT
TB '01

I had gone over to The Baxter Building because our client, Reed Richards, had wanted me to look into the lease.
I remember you once asking me how these things start and my joking about how someone has to throw the first punch.
Electro -- a man who could absorb and discharge electricity -- was there and he shouldn't have been.
I had brought my costume along in my briefcase. In my briefcase, Karen, what was I thinking about?
And. He threw the first punch.
DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD STOP ME?
I'VE FOUGHT SPIDER-MAN TO A STANDSTILL!
YOU'RE HARDLY WORTH MY TIME!
41
ZZRAK!
Villains would talk a lot back then.
They didn't leave innocent women in a pool of blood...
...I guess...I haven't really thought about it...but the ones in costume never used to kill anybody...
NNNGGNN!

Deep down, I knew this wasn't my fight. The Fantastic Four probably had a hundred ways of dealing with someone like Electro.
I'M GOING TO LET YOU LIVE *THIS* TIME. I WANT YOU TO *ALWAYS* REMEMBER THAT IF YOU GO UP AGAINST *ELECTRO* --
-- YOU'RE GOING TO *LOSE.*
My teeth fillings were still rattling from the electric jolts in his punches.
If the soles of my shoes hadn't been rubber, I'm sure I would've been hurt a lot worse.
So, I did what any blind lawyer with two degrees from Columbia University would have done in this situation.
I followed him.

The "how" was the easy part. His electron-charged particles shimmered in my head like a neon trail.
MUSIC HALL
ROCKETTES
The "why" of "Why did I Follow him?"... That's not so easy.
HE WENT UP THERE!
SOMEBODY CALL THE POLICE!
Looking back on it, it was all so "There's no need to fear, Underdog is here...!"
LADIES...

But, this wasn't a cartoon. There was no Sweet Polly who was in danger.
SHOOM
In fact, all Electro had done was stolen some of Reed Richards' papers in the hopes of selling top secrets.
IT'S ONE OF THOSE "SUPER HEROES"!
YOU MEAN, LIKE "SPIDER-MAN"?!
NO! I'VE GOT A COUSIN WHO'S A COP. HE SAYS HE'S CALLED "DAREDEVIL"!
OUT TO MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF? IS THAT IT, DAREDEVIL?
YOU FIGURE BRINGING IN A "SUPER-VILLAIN" IS GOING TO GET YOU INTO THE AVENGERS OR SOMETHING?
I had put on the costume to find justice for my Dad's murder. What did this have to do with that?

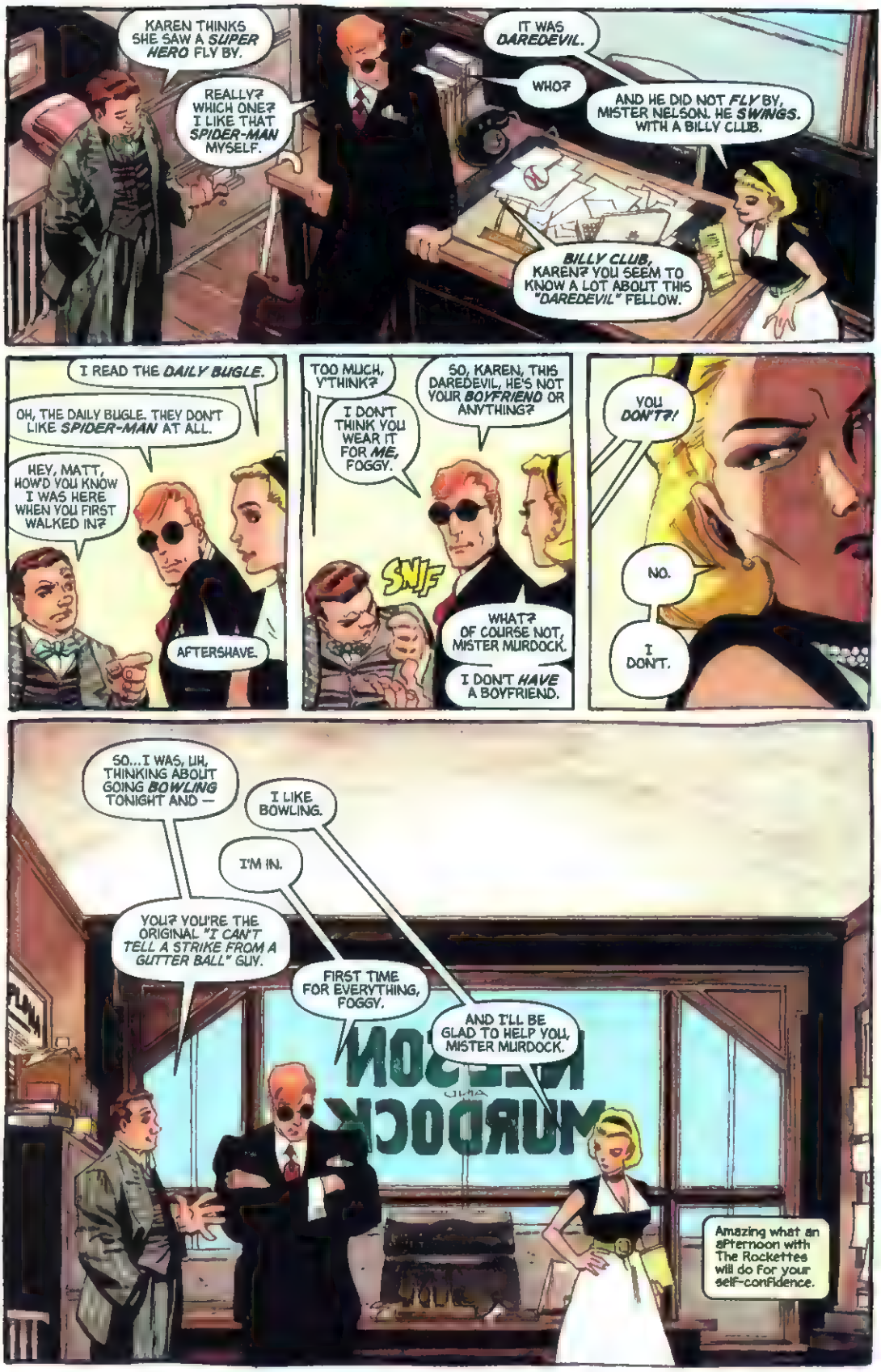
WELL, NOT ON MY DIME, PAL.
YOU STICK WITH SMALL TIME WISEGUYS WITH THEIR POP GUNS.
TOK
POP!
YEAH, I HEARD ALL ABOUT HOW YOU SHUT DOWN "THE FIXER" AND HIS BOYS.
IF YOU WANT TO PLAY IN THE BIG LEAGUES, YOU'D BETTER LEARN TO CARRY A BIGGER --
VZZZT!
--STICKKKK/
Super heroes. Super-villains. Avengers. Fantastic Four. Making a name for myself.

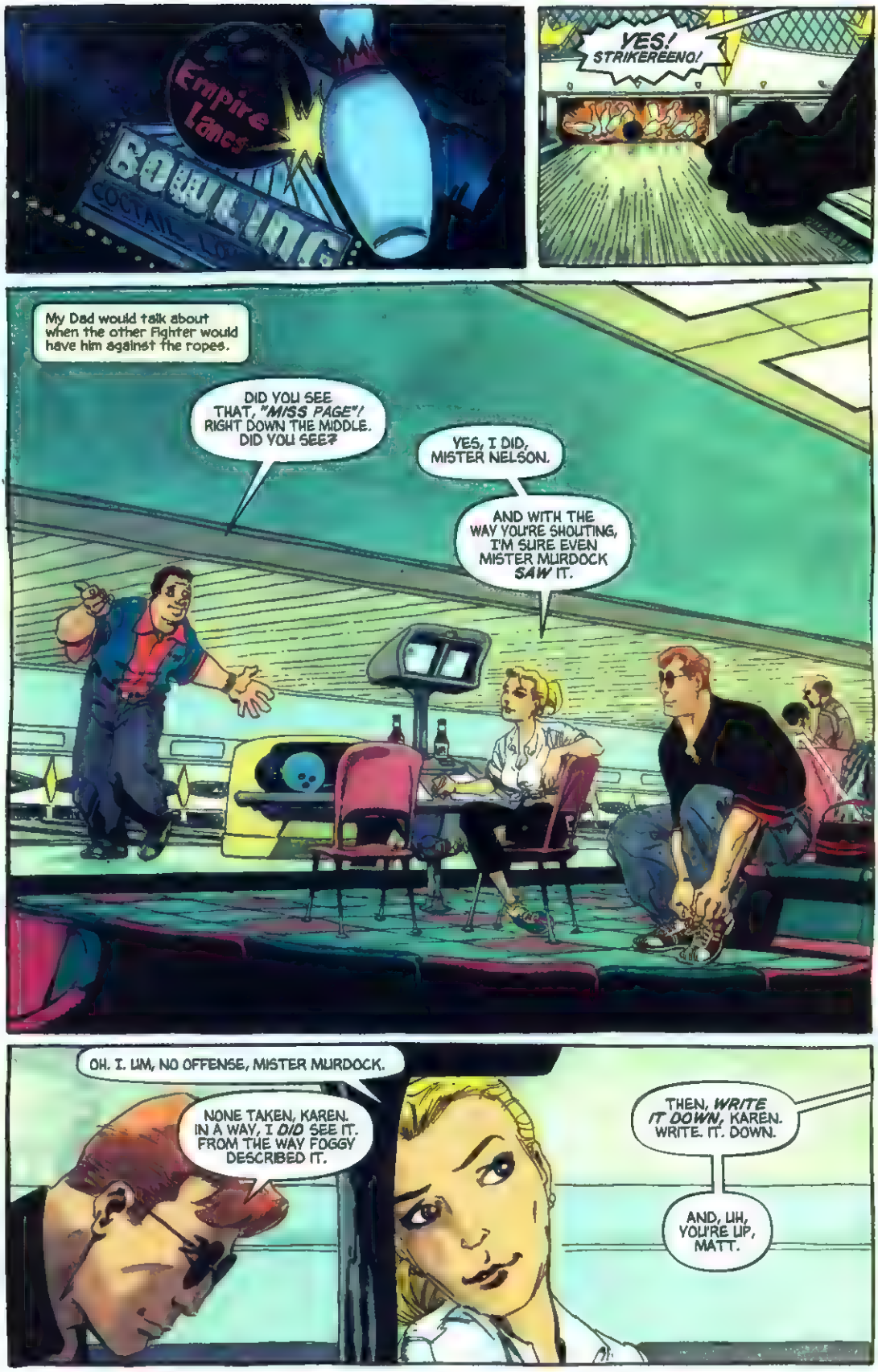
This was new.
BAM!

NOW, I THINK SOMEONE SHOULD CALL THE POLICE.
Maybe, this wasn't why I was struck by a radioactive isotope that took away my vision and heightened my other senses.
Maybe, I was somehow wasting all the time I put in practicing -- honing my skills -- training without my Dad knowing.
HE'S SO HANDSOME UP CLOSE.
WISH MY BOYFRIEND HAD THOSE MUSCLES.
ARE YOU MARRIED, MISTER DAREDEVIL?
DO YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND, MISTER DAREDEVIL?
But...I liked it.

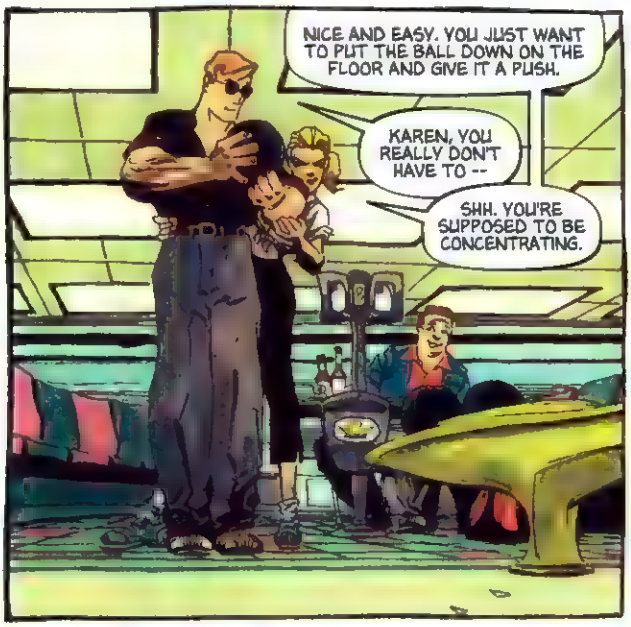
Did I have a girlfriend, Karen?
-- FURTHER, MISTER "OWL," WHILE WE MAY REPRESENT YOU, NOT HAVING YOUR FULL LEGAL NAME IS PROBLEMATIC --
DIPLOMA
NELSON AND MURDOCK
OMIGOSH! MISTER NELSON, LOOK!
KAREN, WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?
I SAW HIM. THE NEW ONE.
THAT DAREDEVIL PERSON.

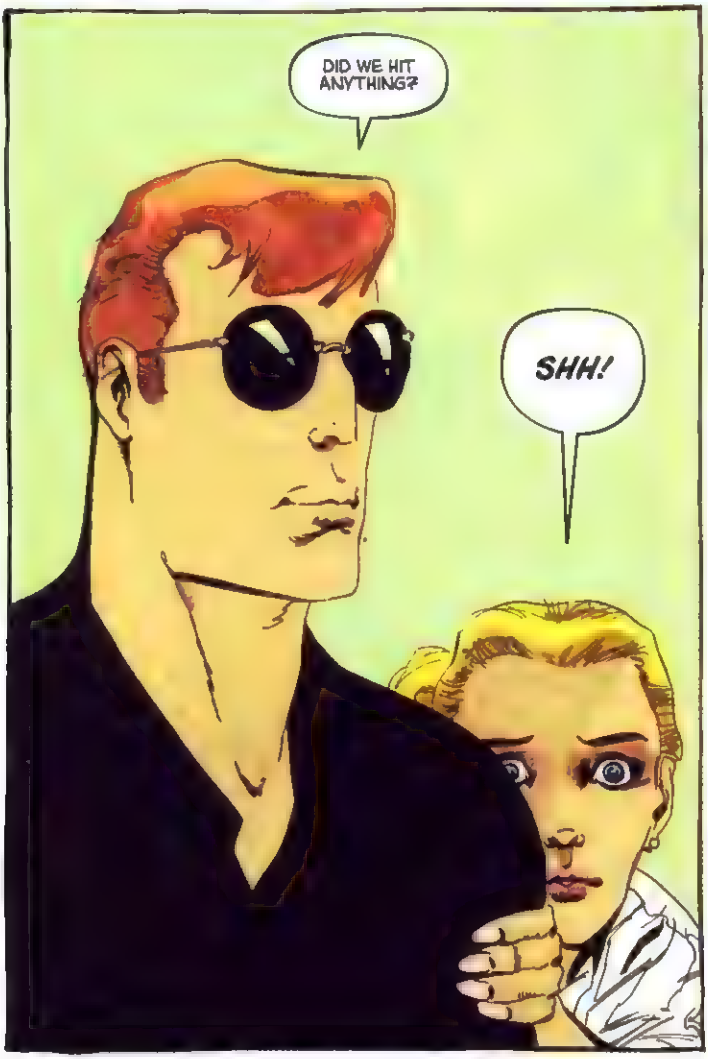
I'M SURE YOU DID, KAREN. WE LIVE IN NEW YORK CITY.
WE HAVE THE FANTASTIC FOUR FOR OUR CLIENTS. THE THING STUCK HIS BIG, FAT HEAD THROUGH THAT WALL.
AND RIGHT NOW, WE'RE REPRESENTING SOMEONE WHO COULD BE THE BIRDMAN OF ALCATRAZ FOR ALL WE KNOW --
-- AND I'D LIKE TO THINK YOU WERE TAKING DICTATION AND NOT LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW FOR MEN IN THEIR PAJAMAS.
ANY IDEA WHERE I WAS?
"-- FURTHER, MISTER 'OWL,' WHILE WE MAY REPRESENT YOU, NOT HAVING YOUR FULL LEGAL NAME IS PROBLEMATIC --"
AND I THINK, MISTER NELSON, YOU WERE GOING TO FINISH THE SENTENCE "-- WITH REGARD TO OUR BILLING YOU."
OH.
GOOD.
AND, IT'S "FOGGY," KAREN, OKAY?
AREN'T YOU JUST THE LEAST BIT CURIOUS WHAT A SUPER HERO IS DOING IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD?
WHAT IF HE LIVES AROUND HERE?
WHAT IF HE SUDDENLY CAME WALKING THROUGH THAT --
-- DOOR -- HELLO, MISTER MURDOCK.
HELLO, KAREN. FOGGY. WHAT'S ALL THE EXCITEMENT?

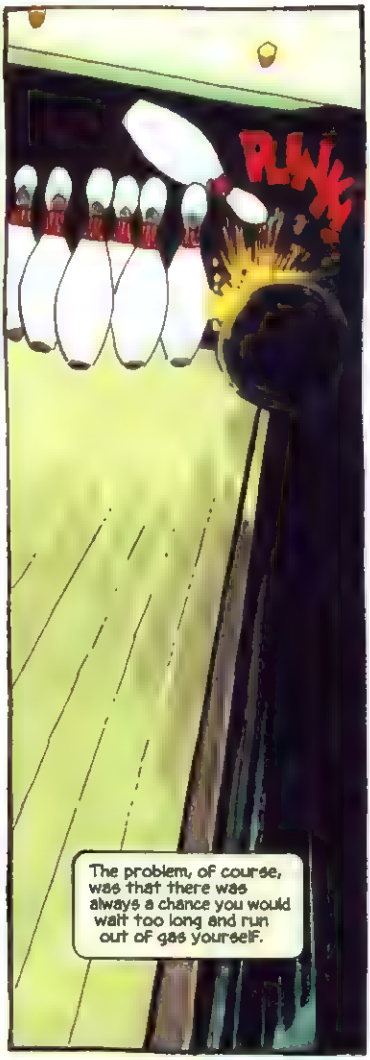

KAREN THINKS SHE SAW A SUPER HERO FLY BY.
REALLY? WHICH ONE? I LIKE THAT SPIDER-MAN MYSELF.
IT WAS DAREDEVIL.
WHO?
AND HE DID NOT FLY BY, MISTER NELSON. HE SWINGS. WITH A BILLY CLUB.
BILLY CLUB, KAREN? YOU SEEM TO KNOW A LOT ABOUT THIS "DAREDEVIL" FELLOW.
I READ THE DAILY BUGLE.
OH, THE DAILY BUGLE. THEY DON'T LIKE SPIDER-MAN AT ALL.
HEY, MATT, HOW'D YOU KNOW I WAS HERE WHEN YOU FIRST WALKED IN?
AFTERSHAVE.
TOO MUCH, Y'THINK?
I DON'T THINK YOU WEAR IT FOR ME, FOGGY.
SO, KAREN, THIS DAREDEVIL, HE'S NOT YOUR BOYFRIEND OR ANYTHING?
SNIF
WHAT? OF COURSE NOT, MISTER MURDOCK.
I DON'T HAVE A BOYFRIEND.
YOU DON'T?!
NO.
I DON'T.
SO... I WAS, UH, THINKING ABOUT GOING BOWLING TONIGHT AND —
I LIKE BOWLING.
I'M IN.
YOU? YOU'RE THE ORIGINAL "I CAN'T TELL A STRIKE FROM A GUTTER BALL" GUY.
FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING, FOGGY.
AND I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP YOU, MISTER MURDOCK.
Amazing what an afternoon with The Rockettes will do for your self-confidence.


Empire Lanes
BOWLING
COCKTAIL LOUNGE
YES! STRIKEREENO!
My Dad would talk about when the other fighter would have him against the ropes.
DID YOU SEE THAT, "MISS PAGE"! RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE. DID YOU SEE?
YES, I DID, MISTER NELSON.
AND WITH THE WAY YOU'RE SHOUTING, I'M SURE EVEN MISTER MURDOCK SAW IT.
OH. I. UM, NO OFFENSE, MISTER MURDOCK.
NONE TAKEN, KAREN. IN A WAY, I DID SEE IT. FROM THE WAY FOGGY DESCRIBED IT.
THEN, WRITE IT DOWN, KAREN. WRITE. IT. DOWN.
AND, UH, YOU'RE UP, MATT.

ARE YOU SURE YOU WOULDN'T LIKE A LITTLE HELP?
I COULD BREAK ONE EIGHTY TONIGHT. I COULD...
NO, THANKS, I THINK I GOT IT.
YOU WILL TELL ME IF I'M AIMING AT THE SNACK BAR, WON'T YOU, KAREN?
The crowd always thought the fighter was in jeopardy. My Dad liked that. He was holding it all back, in reserve. Waiting for the other man to run out of gas.
THUNK!
OH, MISTER MURDOCK...


NICE AND EASY. YOU JUST WANT TO PUT THE BALL DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND GIVE IT A PUSH.
KAREN, YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO --
SHH. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE CONCENTRATING.


DID WE HIT ANYTHING?
SHH!


PLINK!
The problem, of course, was that there was always a chance you would wait too long and run out of gas yourself.

When you're young, you think you are going to live forever.

I'll never forget that night, Karen. It was the first time I felt your body pressed against me.
It was like...
It was like your heart was pounding right inside of mine.
NEW YORK STATE PENITENTIARY
It wasn't that long after that night, Slade, the man who had put a bullet in the back of my Dad's head, was put to death. I thought I'd be ironic and bring pistachio nuts and eat them in the gallery.
I didn't...couldn't take them out of my pocket.

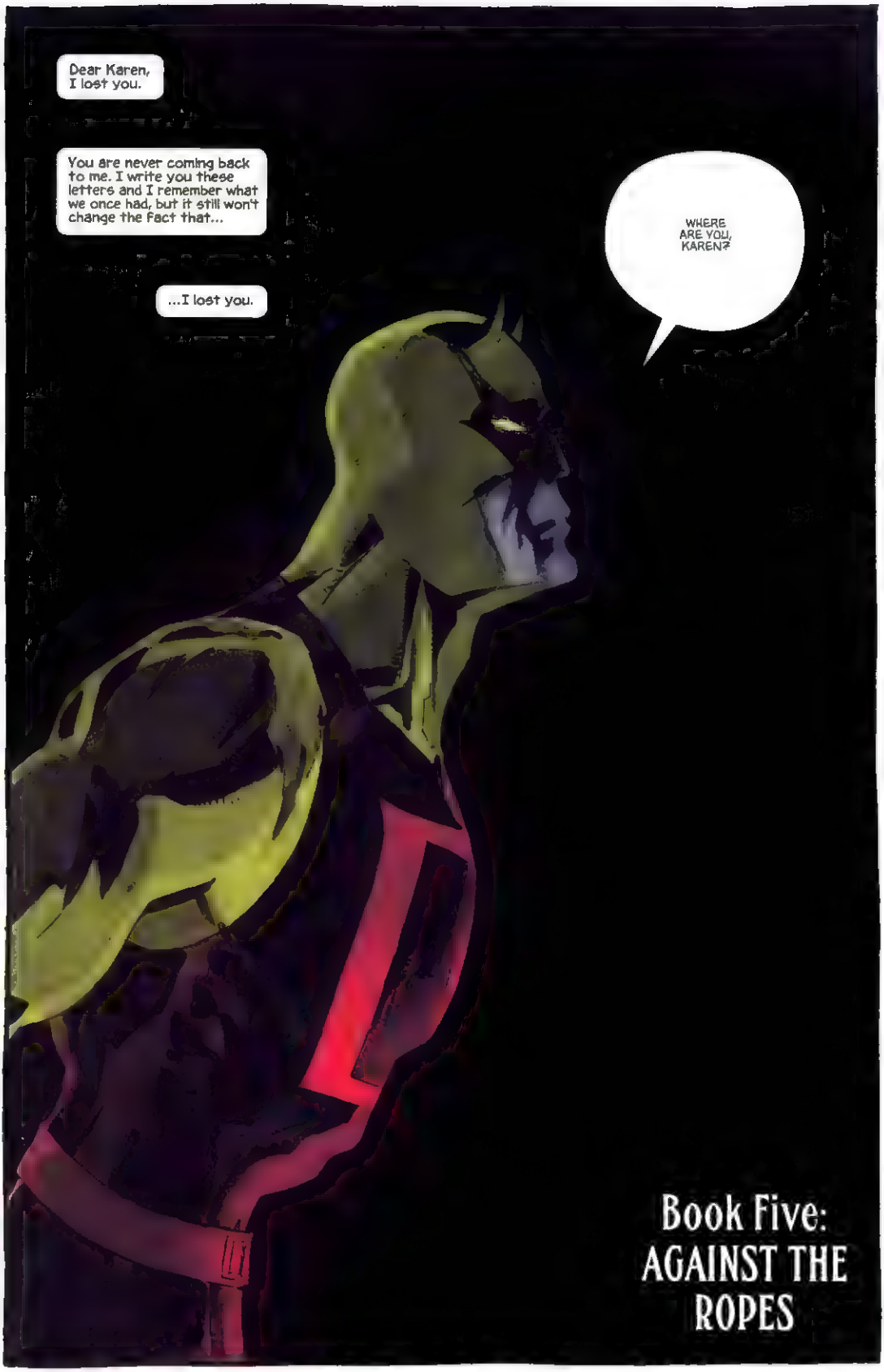
Both you and Foggy urged me not to attend.
But, the lawyer part of me wanted to know what an execution was like.
The good son wanted to see it through to the end.

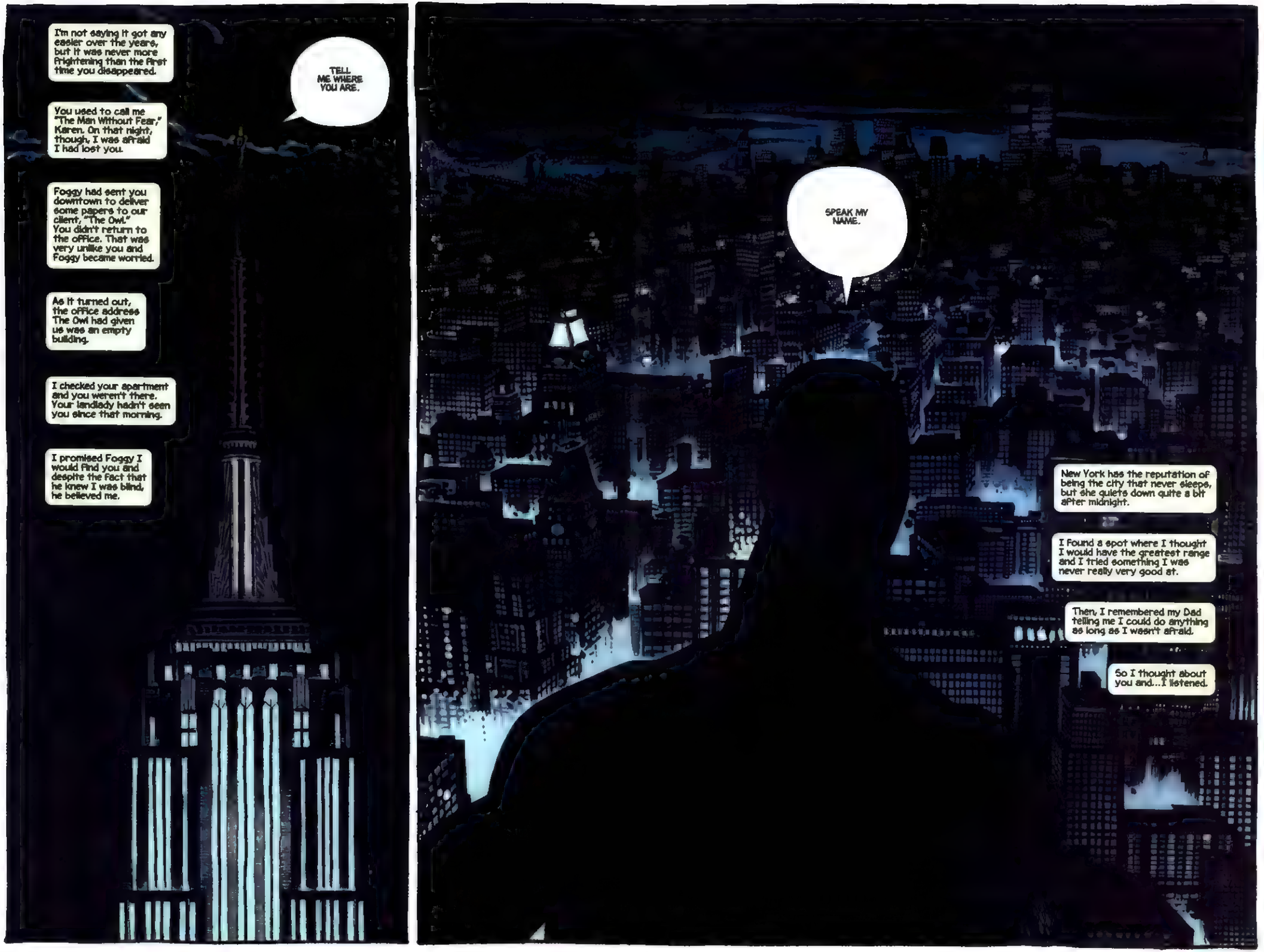
I think I thought it was going to be like Fighting Electro. Sparks and jolts and excitement and...
KHOOM
DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE
...it wasn't.
The smell, Karen. Even through the glass partition. Even if it had been three feet of poured concrete.
The smell...

I went back to the apartment. I don't know if you remember that I lived there after my Dad died.
I think I told you some excuse about not being able to find affordable housing, when all I really wanted to do was hold onto him for a little longer.
But, the firm was making money now, and I could change a few things. I bought a refrigerator that didn't leak. A new mattress for the bed.
I never got rid of his chair.

Every morning, I passed your desk and slipped my fingers across your handwriting. You always left out your steno notes from our meetings.
My words in your hand.
Maybe... that's why I agreed to write these letters to you now.
MATT? MATT, THAT YOU?!
I found Foggy that morning wearing a hole into the carpet.
OH, GOOD, IT *IS* YOU. I THOUGHT IT MIGHT'VE BEEN KAREN --
-- NO, NO, I *SENT* KAREN OVER TO *"THE OWL'S"* OFFICE WITH SOME PAPERWORK. THAT GUY'S A WEIRD OLD BIRD. HA! I MADE A JOKE. OWL. BIRD. HEH.
SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, FOGGY? YOU SOUND A LITTLE... *TENSE.*
HOW LONG HAVE WE KNOWN EACH OTHER, MATT? DON'T ANSWER THAT -- IT'S A RHETORICAL -- BUT THE POINT IS --
-- THE *POINT* IS YOU'VE KNOWN ME LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW WHEN I CAN TELL SOMETHING IS RIGHT, I *KNOW* IT.
I KNEW IT THE FIRST DAY I MET YOU. *"NELSON & MURDOCK"* JUST FLASHED IN MY HEAD. AND HERE WE ARE.
AND HERE WE ARE... MATT, I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT LONG AND HARD AND I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.
I was so blind, Karen. I could sense things no other person could, but on this one subject, I was in the dark.

I'M GOING TO ASK KAREN TO *MARRY* ME.
LOEB SALE 2001


Dear Karen,
I lost you.
You are never coming back to me. I write you these letters and I remember what we once had, but it still won't change the fact that...
...I lost you.
WHERE ARE YOU, KAREN?
Book Five:
AGAINST THE ROPES


I'm not saying it got any easier over the years, but it was never more frightening than the first time you disappeared.
You used to call me "The Man Without Fear," Karen. On that night, though, I was afraid I had lost you.
Foggy had sent you downtown to deliver some papers to our client, "The Owl." You didn't return to the office. That was very unlike you and Foggy became worried.
As it turned out, the office address The Owl had given us was an empty building.
I checked your apartment and you weren't there. Your landlady hadn't seen you since that morning.
I promised Foggy I would find you and despite the fact that he knew I was blind, he believed me.
TELL ME WHERE YOU ARE.
SPEAK MY NAME.
New York has the reputation of being the city that never sleeps, but she quiets down quite a bit after midnight.
I found a spot where I thought I would have the greatest range and I tried something I was never really very good at.
Then, I remembered my Dad telling me I could do anything as long as I wasn't afraid.
So I thought about you and...I listened.

At first, it was just a lot of noise.
BTOOM! BTOOM! BTOOM! SKRE
SKREEE WHEEOO
WHEEOO WHEEOO
...WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY..?
...THIS IS ME, HOLDING MY BREATH...
...FINE, YOU WANT ME TO DRIVE..?
...YOU SHUT THE HELL UP...
...WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OLD BANK..?
...LIKE I CARE...
...SHE'S EXACTLY YOUR TYPE...
...HAVE WE MET..?
...T'AMORE, CHRISTINE...
Then.
...MISTER MURDOCK...

...HE'LL REALIZE I'M MISSING AND HE'LL CALL THE POLICE AND...
...HE *WON'T* GO TO THE POLICE IF HE DOESN'T WANT TO SEE YOU HARMED, MISS PAGE...
...WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?
...ANYONE CAN *OWN* ANYONE, MISS PAGE. THE KEY IS OWNING THE *RIGHT* PLAYERS ON THE BOARD.
...TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, YOUR EMPLOYER, MISTER MURDOCK...
...MISTER MURDOCK IS *BLIND* AND BLIND MEN ELICIT A CERTAIN SYMPATHY FROM A JURY...
...OWNING A PIECE LIKE *THAT* MAKES THE GAME THAT MUCH EASIER TO PLAY...
...AND ONCE MISTER MURDOCK REALIZES HOW VULNERABLE HE IS BY MY KEEPING YOU HOSTAGE, HE'LL DANCE LIKE ANY PUPPET ON MY STRINGS...
The Owl was with you and you kept him talking. And he was the sort of man who liked to talk.
KEEP HIM TALKING, KAREN.

By the time I found the right building, The Owl was no longer there. Someone else was there with you. A woman's voice. Her name was Grace, and she had wanted to hire us, claiming to be terrified by The Owl.
...WAIT, I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE THAT WOMAN WHO CAME TO OUR OFFICE. YOU GAVE US THAT WILD STORY ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND...
...I DID WHAT I WAS TOLD. IT WAS WHAT THE OWL WANTED AND I DID WHAT I WAS TOLD...
FINANCIAL BANK
FOR LEASE
BUT HE'S GONE NOW. YOU COULD HELP ME TO GET OUT OF HERE.
DO YOU THINK THIS WAS EASY FOR ME?
THE OWL UNCOVERED THINGS ABOUT ME. PERSONAL THINGS. SECRETS.
HE PROMISED THAT IF I PLAYED MY ROLE, HE'D LET ME GO AND NOW I HAVE AND HE HAS, TOO.

JUST... FIND THE KEYS AND THROW THEM UP TO ME.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
SOMEDAY.
SOMEDAY YOU'LL HAVE A SECRET AND YOU'LL SEE HOW MUCH IT'S WORTH TO YOU.
DON'T GO!
THERE'S NO ONE TO HELP ME...

I'LL HELP YOU, MISS.
You smiled. Even though I couldn't see you, I could tell. You smiled and in my head it was as bright as day.
WHO -- DAREDEVIL..?!

FIRST, WE HAVE TO GET YOU OUT OF THERE.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? BEND STEEL WITH YOUR BARE...
...HANDS!
NOT EXACTLY BARE. THE GLOVES HELP.
DON'T BE FRIGHTENED.
WHY? AREN'T YOU AFRAID?
SHOULD I BE?
I didn't tell you that by touching the bars, I could sense their weakest point.
Or maybe, it was like those moments where the adrenaline is running so high, ordinary men can lift up cars.
Or maybe, on that night, I was determined never to lose you again.

OH.
OH, I SEE.
DAREDEVIL.
THE MAN *WITHOUT* FEAR.
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE WHEN THE OWL GETS BACK.
THEN... YOU'LL HAVE TO LET GO OF ME.
RIGHT.
NOW, RUN, KAREN! DON'T STOP FOR ANYTHING UNTIL YOU REACH THE POLICE!
Holding you in my arms, it never occurred to me that you were so close you might recognize me.
The cut of my chin. The sound of my voice even though I had lowered it like a super hero is supposed to.
Something that would give me away. After all, it was the first time Daredevil had met Karen Page.
"KAREN"...?

Oops.
HOW... HOW DID YOU KNOW MY NAME?
THAT'S EASY, KAREN.
I'VE SEEN YOU IN MY DREAMS EVER SINCE I CAN REMEMBER.
How much different would our lives be if I had just told you right then? Would you still be alive today?
HA!
VERY FUNNY. YOU PROBABLY JUST OVERHEARD ME TALKING TO THE OWL OR...
GO! NOW! THE OWL IS --
I was so focused on you, I didn't notice the scent in the bank had changed.

YOU CAN'T COME INTO AN OWL'S ROOST AND STEAL HIS EGGS.
IN THE NIGHT, IN THE DARKNESS, THE OWL RULES.
It all happened so quickly. I know that my attention was diverted by you, Karen, but...
WHAM!
...In the darkness, I should have had the advantage.

I hadn't had much experience with super-villains. And I didn't think of The Owl as anyone other than a lumbering businessman.
HEE-HEE WHOOO WHOOo HEE!
He could fly, Karen. Like, well, a bird. A big. Fat. Bird.
THIS IS A BUSINESS MATTER BETWEEN TWO PARTIES. IT SHOULD NOT INVOLVE YOU.
I'M FAIRLY CERTAIN THAT THERE ARE SOME HOOLIGANS WHO NEED ROUSTING SOMEWHERE ELSE TO OCCUPY YOUR TIME.
And while I was still getting my bearings, he was going to beat my brains in.
Right in front of my gal.

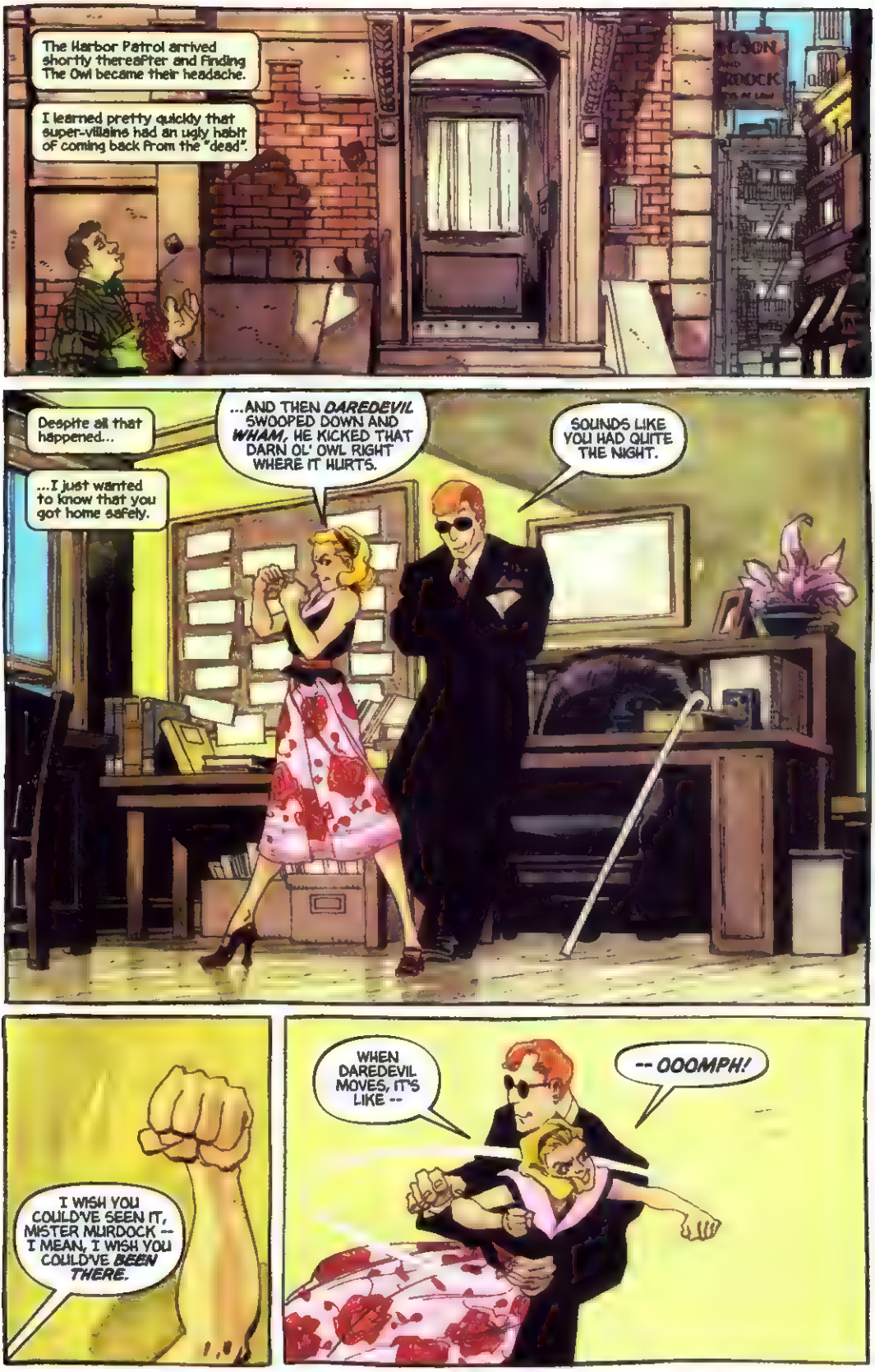
You never would listen to me, would you, Karen?
SORRY, TUBBY, BUT YOU'RE THE CHEAP, PENNY-ANTE CROOK I PICKED FOR TONIGHT.
WHEET WHEET WHEET
Even if it was for your own good, you were too stubborn, too of your own mind, to let me tell you anything.
Maybe, that's why I loved you so.
LEAVING SO SOON? THE PARTY HASN'T EVEN --
...STARTED../

HEE HEE
WHOOO
WHOOO
HEE!
The Owl nearly got away that night.
More than anything, it meant he could hunt you down and hurt you.
HE WHO LIVES TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY AND ALL THAT...
I was young and foolish enough that I thought I could keep this from happening ever again.
THE MOTTO OF *COWARDS* AND *THIEVES,* OWL.

WE ARE FINISHING THIS TONIGHT!
My father would talk about what it would take to put a man down in the ring and keep him there.

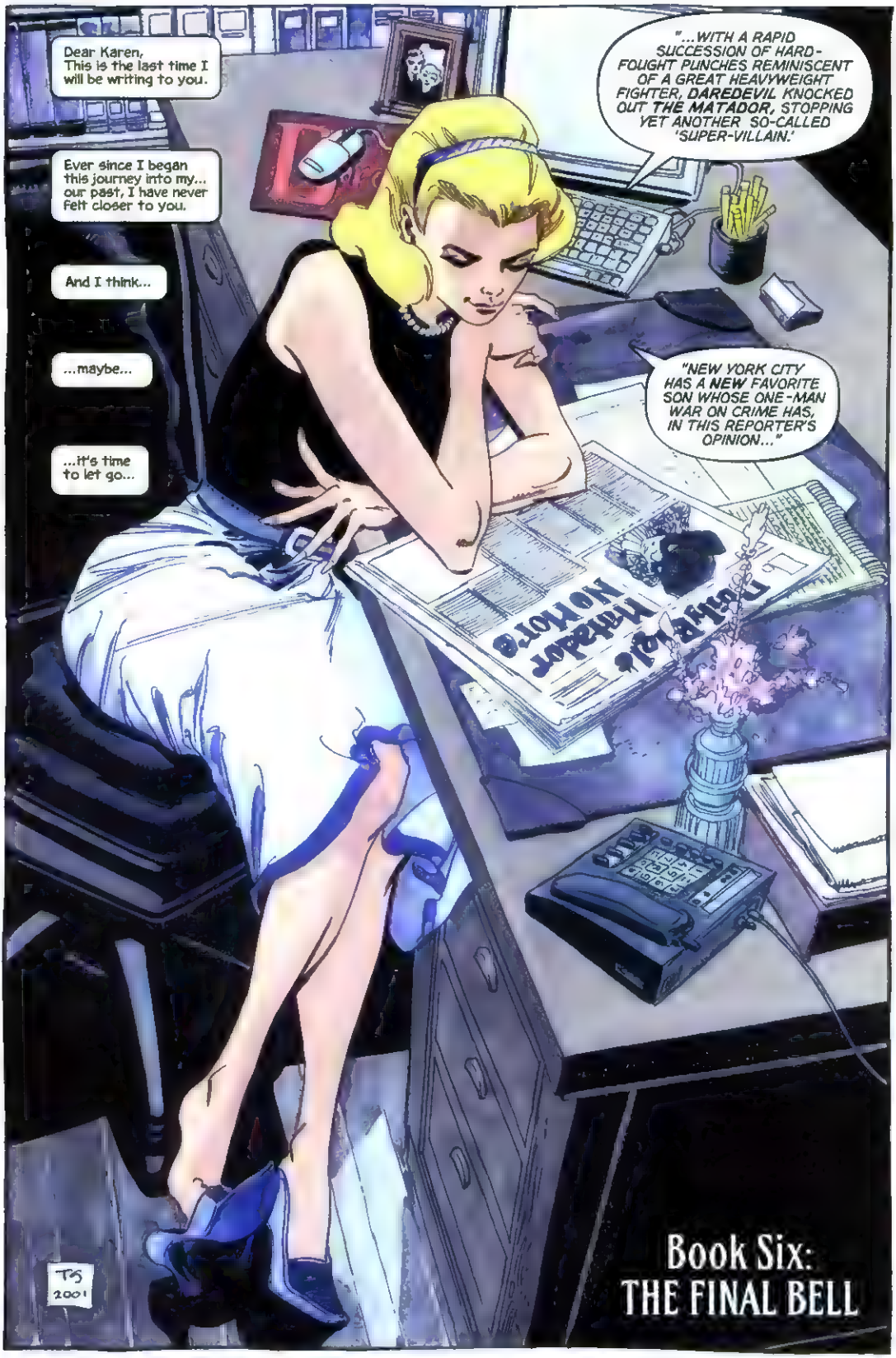
How on some nights you could hit a man with everything you had, and he would not fall down.
It wasn't that the other fighter was impervious. He could be bloodied and rocking, but something held him up.
He was hoping to be saved by the bell.

It wasn't the most distinguished way to win, but you could say you went the distance.
In boxing, that meant you held onto an ounce of respect.
If you were still standing, you might even get a rematch.
It all came down to where you were at that Final bell.


The Harbor Patrol arrived shortly thereafter and finding The Owl became their headache.
I learned pretty quickly that super-villains had an ugly habit of coming back from the "dead".
Despite all that happened...
...I just wanted to know that you got home safely.
...AND THEN DAREDEVIL SWOOPED DOWN AND WHAM, HE KICKED THAT DARN OL' OWL RIGHT WHERE IT HURTS.
SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAD QUITE THE NIGHT.
I WISH YOU COULD'VE SEEN IT, MISTER MURDOCK -- I MEAN, I WISH YOU COULD'VE BEEN THERE.
WHEN DAREDEVIL MOVES, IT'S LIKE --
-- OOOMPH!

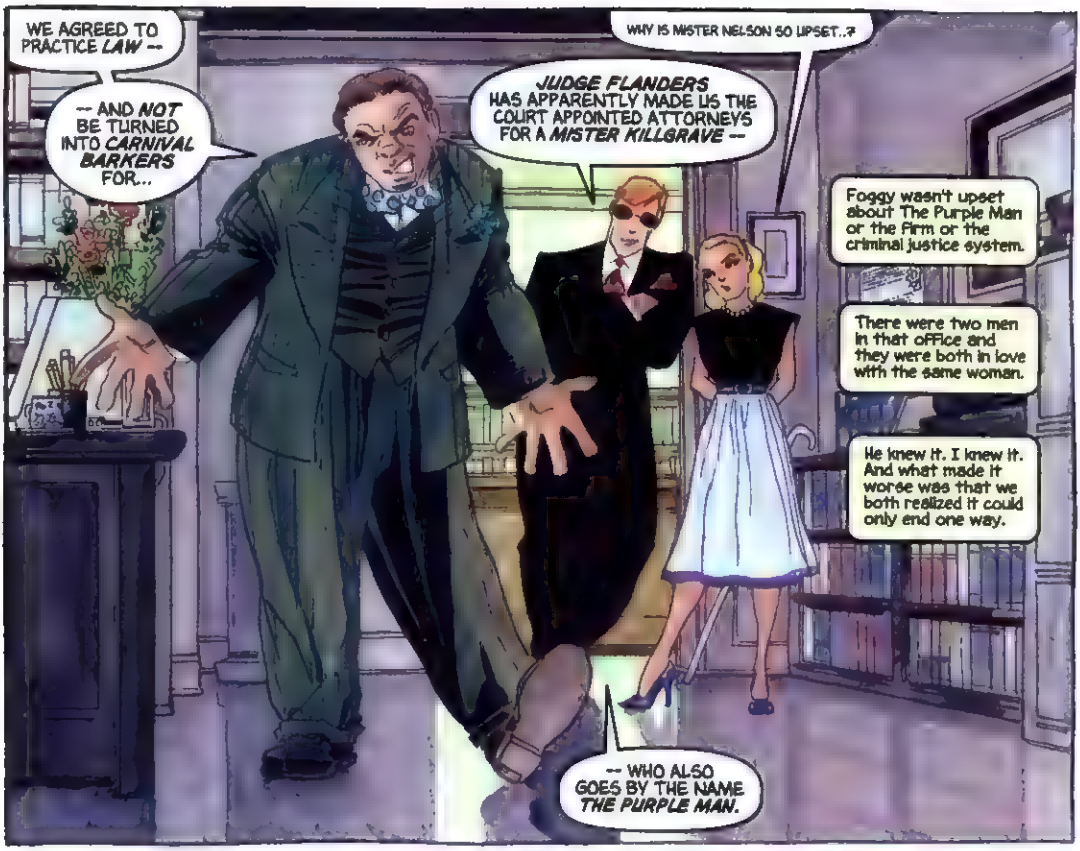
KAREN.
THE WAY YOU TALK ABOUT DAREDEVIL... A *REGULAR GUY* WOULDN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHANCE...
...THAT IS... IF YOU STILL DON'T HAVE A BOYFRIEND.
PRIVATE
WHY? DO YOU HAVE SOMEBODY IN MIND?
UM...
PRIVATE
YOU'RE NOT *JEALOUS* OF *DAREDEVIL*, ARE YOU, MISTER MURDOCK?

UH... I DON'T THINK I'D MAKE A VERY GOOD SUPER HERO, KAREN. ALL THAT FIGHTING AND FLYING AROUND.
I THINK THE ONLY PERSON I'D WIND UP HURTING WOULD BE MYSELF!
"TAKE THAT, VILLAIN! SAY, DID I HIT YOU OR WAS THAT THE LAMP?"
OH, MISTER MURDOCK...
LOEB SALE 2001

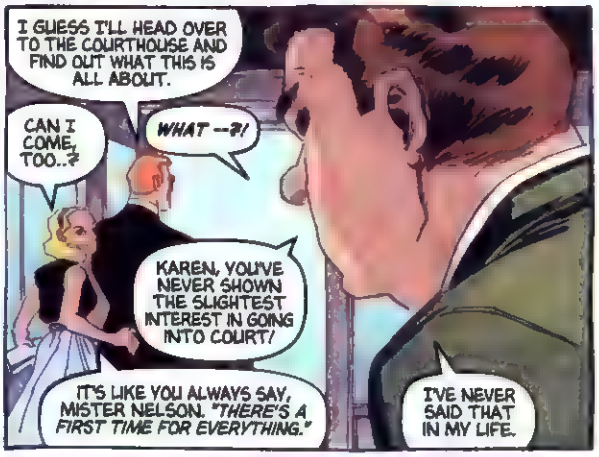

Dear Karen,
This is the last time I will be writing to you.
Ever since I began this journey into my... our past, I have never felt closer to you.
And I think...
...maybe...
...it's time to let go...
"...WITH A RAPID SUCCESSION OF HARD-FOUGHT PUNCHES REMINISCENT OF A GREAT HEAVYWEIGHT FIGHTER, DAREDEVIL KNOCKED OUT THE MATADOR, STOPPING YET ANOTHER SO-CALLED 'SUPER-VILLAIN.'
"NEW YORK CITY HAS A NEW FAVORITE SON WHOSE ONE-MAN WAR ON CRIME HAS, IN THIS REPORTER'S OPINION..."
Daily Bugle
Matador No More
TG 2001
Book Six:
THE FINAL BELL

You named me "The Man Without Fear" and I'm beginning to realize that my greatest fear...
...is living in a world without you.
"...EARNED THIS BRIGHT YOUNG HERO THE HONOR OF THE KEY TO THE CITY AS A REWARD FOR HIS BATTLES."
MISTER MURDOCK, IS THAT WHY YOU THINK HE DOES WHAT HE DOES?
IS THAT WHY I THINK WHO DOES WHAT, KAREN?
WHY, DAREDEVIL, OF COURSE. THIS REPORTER...
...MISTER...UM... BEN URICH SEEMS TO FEEL DAREDEVIL SHOULD GET SOME SORT OF REWARD AND I WONDER IF HE EVEN WANTS ANY KIND OF REWARD.
RING! RING!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO IS SOMETHING OF THE EXPERT ON THIS DAREDEVIL PERSON.
AFTER ALL, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE OF US TO HAVE ACTUALLY MET HIM.
UM... HELL-O, PEOPLE?
HEY!
ISN'T ANYONE GOING TO ANSWER THE PHONE?!
RING! RING!

OH, FOR THE LOVE OF --
NELSON AND MURDOCK. HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?
DID THEY REALLY CALL HIM A "BRIGHT YOUNG HERO"?
I NEVER THOUGHT OF HIM AS "YOUNG."
NOW, SPIDER-MAN. HE SEEMS YOUNG TO ME.
WHAT?! C'MON, JUDGE, THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER LAW FIRM WHO CAN HANDLE...
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS OF HIM, AREN'T YOU, MISTER MURDOCK?
NOW, KAREN...
DON'T DENY IT. EVERY TIME I BRING HIM UP, YOU HAVE SOME SORT OF SMART-ALECK REMARK --
WHAT HAS THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM TURNED INTO?!


WE AGREED TO PRACTICE LAW --
-- AND NOT BE TURNED INTO CARNIVAL BARKERS FOR...
JUDGE FLANDERS HAS APPARENTLY MADE US THE COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEYS FOR A MISTER KILLGRAVE --
WHY IS MISTER NELSON SO UPSET..?
-- WHO ALSO GOES BY THE NAME THE PURPLE MAN.
Foggy wasn't upset about The Purple Man or the firm or the criminal justice system.
There were two men in that office and they were both in love with the same woman.
He knew it. I knew it. And what made it worse was that we both realized it could only end one way.

AND HOW WOULD YOU KNOW THAT?
OH, NEVER MIND, YOU JUST DO.
JUST LIKE YOU DO WHATEVER THE HELL ELSE YOU WANT TO DO ALL THE TIME!
MISTER NELSON!

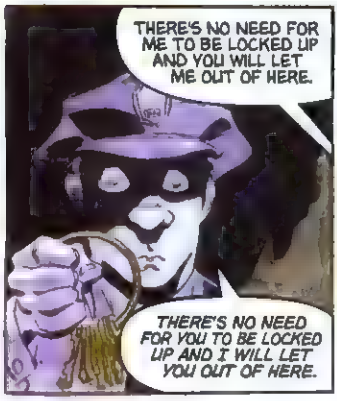

I GUESS I'LL HEAD OVER TO THE COURTHOUSE AND FIND OUT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.
CAN I COME, TOO..?
WHAT --?!
KAREN, YOU'VE NEVER SHOWN THE SLIGHTEST INTEREST IN GOING INTO COURT!
IT'S LIKE YOU ALWAYS SAY, MISTER NELSON. "THERE'S A FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING."
I'VE NEVER SAID THAT IN MY LIFE.

AND IT'S "FOGGY," NOT "MISTER NELSON"!

CAN I ASK YOU A QUESTION, MISTER MURDOCK?
Why did you have to be so damn lovable, Karen?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO *ASK* IF YOU CAN ASK A QUESTION, KAREN. YOU CAN JUST ASK IT.
WHY DO YOU THINK HE WEARS A MASK?

THAT'S *ENOUGH* DAREDEVIL FOR TODAY, KAREN.
WE'RE NOT BACK IN THE OFFICE. WE'RE HERE TO LOOK AFTER THE INTERESTS OF OUR *CLIENT*.
YOU DON'T THINK HE HAS SOMETHING TO HIDE, DO YOU? PEOPLE WHO WEAR MASKS OFTEN HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE. I WONDER WHAT HE'S HIDING?
I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA.

MISTER KILLGRAVE. I'M MATT MURDOCK AND THIS IS MY ASSOCIATE, *KAREN PAGE*.
THE COURT HAS APPOINTED MY FIRM AS YOUR LEGAL COUNSEL.
THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE, MISTER MURDOCK. I *WON'T* BE NEEDING A LAWYER.
YOU'LL... BE REPRESENTING YOURSELF THEN?
NO. I WON'T BE STAYING IN JAIL ANY LONGER. GUARD!


THERE'S NO NEED FOR ME TO BE LOCKED UP AND YOU WILL LET ME OUT OF HERE.
THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO BE LOCKED UP AND I WILL LET YOU OUT OF HERE.

MISTER MURDOCK. I DO APPRECIATE YOU BRINGING ME SOME *FEMALE COMPANIONSHIP*.
LET'S GO, KAREN.
OH, AND GUARD, LOCK HIM UP.

BONK

It didn't take long to figure out that somehow The Purple Man could control people with his... aura.
One of the few times being blind and, more specifically, color blind, came in handy.
AH, KAREN. IT'S A LOVELY AFTERNOON. WE SHOULD GET A HOTEL ROOM SOMEWHERE, OPEN UP A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION.
I'VE HEARD THE SUITES AT THE PLAZA ARE VERY NICE.
HA! I WAS JUST THINKING THAT, YOU LITTLE MINX.
POLICE
LET THE GIRL GO.
HMMM...
NO.
I THINK THAT THESE POLICE OFFICERS SHOULD SHOOT YOU INSTEAD.

FAP
SO MUCH FOR BEING THIS CITY'S FAVORITE SON...
BLAM!
TOK
BLAM!
TOK
TOK
TOK
I remember my Dad talking about how, in a single moment, the crowd could turn against you.

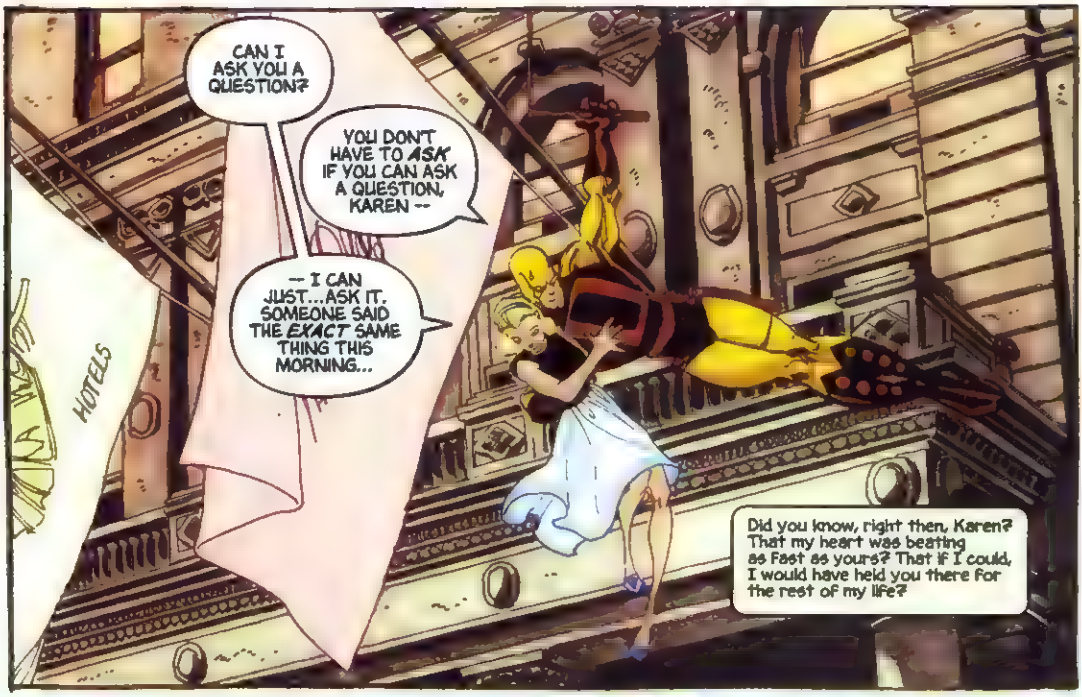
It could be a little thing, like a low blow or a bad call by the ref.
HUH --?
WHAT JUST --?
HEY, HORNHEAD! WHAT'S THE RUSH?
HOW ABOUT AN AUTOGRAPH?
Suddenly, they were hoping you'd get knocked down -- that you would fail.
How many times did I fail you, Karen?
In the end, it was only the last time that mattered...

I fought a lot of foes through the years.
I'VE ORDERED UP SOME ROOM SERVICE, KAREN.
WHY DON'T YOU SLIP INTO SOMETHING MORE COMFORTABLE --
-- AND WE CAN PLAY WITH THE PURPLE MAN.
Doctor Doom. Kingpin. Bullseye.
Bullseye.
THAT'S IT, BABY. NICE AND --
KNOCK KNOCK
WHY IS IT THAT ROOM SERVICE *NEVER* SHOWS UP WHEN YOU *WANT* IT?
They wanted world domination. To run criminal empires. Sought revenge.
YOU MIGHT WANT TO COVER UP, LUV, WHILE I TIP THE --
All Kilgrave wanted was... you. And somehow that seemed much, much worse.

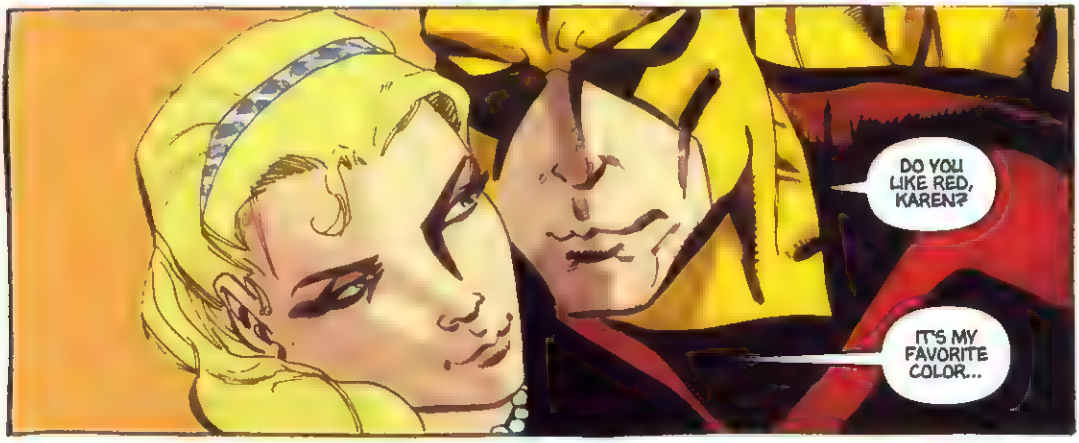
HERE COMES DAREDEVIL!
"The man without fear," right, Karen?

WHAM!
BDIF!
KAREN.
BE A GOOD GIRL...
...AND JUMP OUT THE WINDOW FOR ME.
NO!
Looking back on it... I should have seen this coming.
How many times was I given the choice of saving the girl...

...or stopping the bad guy..?
KAREN.
WE HAVE TO STOP MEETING LIKE THIS.
IT -- IT WAS LIKE HE WAS IN MY HEAD.
I KNOW. IT'S OVER NOW.
ARE YOU ALWAYS GOING TO BE THERE TO SAVE ME?


CAN I ASK YOU A QUESTION?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO *ASK* IF YOU CAN ASK A QUESTION, KAREN --
-- I CAN JUST...ASK IT. SOMEONE SAID THE *EXACT* SAME THING THIS MORNING...
HOTELS
Did you know, right then, Karen? That my heart was beating as fast as yours? That if I could, I would have held you there for the rest of my life?

WHY DO YOU WEAR YELLOW?
WHY DO I WEAR YELLOW?
WELL, I WAS JUST THINKING IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A *DEVIL*, WOULDN'T *RED* BE MORE APPROPRIATE?


DO YOU LIKE RED, KAREN?
IT'S MY FAVORITE COLOR...

UM...DO YOU THINK IT WOULD BE THE WORST IDEA IN THE WORLD IF WE GOT TOGETHER WHEN I'M NOT BEING *KIDNAPPED* OR *HELD HOSTAGE*?
GOT TOGETHER..?
MAYBE...IF YOU'RE NOT *BUSY*, WE COULD MEET ON THE OBSERVATION DECK OF THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING?
ARE YOU ASKING ME OUT ON A DATE?
HOW ABOUT TOMORROW NIGHT AT EIGHT O'CLOCK?
OKAY, KAREN, I'LL BE THERE. AND WE'LL PAINT THE TOWN *RED*...
TALK ABOUT YOUR BAD TIMING...
HEY, ALL YOU LUCKY PEOPLE! KILL DAREDEVIL FOR ME —
FWIP
SNAG
FLOOP!
POW!
KEEP HIM COVERED UP, OFFICER, AND I DON'T THINK HE'LL GIVE YOU ANY MORE —
KAREN! KAREN!

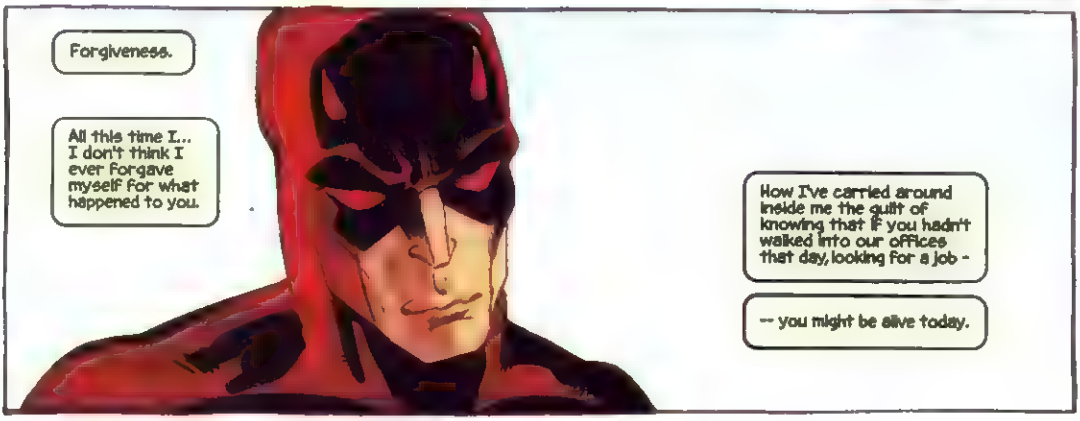
TAKE GOOD CARE OF THIS GAL, FOGGY.
"FOGGY..?"
SHE'S ONE IN A MILLION.
HOW DID YOU..?
LET'S GET YOU HOME, KAREN. YOU'VE HAD MORE THAN A LITTLE EXCITEMENT FOR ONE DAY --
-- AND I'M SURE MATT IS *VERY* WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
HE PHONED ME FROM THE COURTHOUSE WITH A WILD STORY ABOUT YOU AND *THE PURPLE MAN* HEADING HERE AND...
KAREN..?

NELSON & MURDOCK
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
The following morning, I could tell from Foggy's heartbeat that it was all coming to a head.
If Nelson and Murdock was going to keep its doors open, something had to be done about you, Karen.
We should've known that if something was going to be done about you, you would be doing the doing. Not us.
LISTEN, PAL. I TRIED TO HATE YOU. I REALLY DID.
I WAS GONNA BUST YOU RIGHT IN THE NOSE AS HARD AS I COULD.
FOGGY...
BUT, YOU KNOW WHAT? I COULDN'T DO IT. NO, SIR. I COULDN'T.
AND IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOU'RE BLIND. THAT WOULDN'T HAVE STOPPED ME.
BUT, ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH AND ALL WE'RE GOING TO GO THROUGH, IT'S JUST NOT WORTH IT --
-- TO ME, AT LEAST.
SO... YOU CAN HAVE HER.
FOGGY, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
KAREN.
KAREN?
KAREN.
K.
A.
R.
E.
N.
SHE'S ALL YOURS. I WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK AND I HOPE --
NELSON AND MURDOCK ATTORNEYS AT LAW
GOOD MORNING, MATT.
GOOD MORNING, FOGGY.
WHAT HAPPENED TO "MISTER MURDOCK" AND "MISTER NELSON"?

KAREN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HMM..?
OH, OF COURSE. I'M FINE, MATT. WILL YOU BE NEEDING ME LATE TONIGHT?
PRIV
UM. NO. PROBABLY NOT.
WHY? DO YOU HAVE *PLANS* THIS EVENING, *MISS PAGE?*
ACTUALLY, I *DO.*
MISTER DAREDEVIL, HIMSELF, IS GOING TO SHOW ME THE CITY.
"PAINT THE TOWN RED." I BELIEVE WERE HIS *EXACT* WORDS.
NOW, DON'T YOU BOYS HAVE SOME WORK TO DO? WE'VE GOT BILLS TO PAY AROUND HERE.
AFTER YOU, *MISTER* MURDOCK.
PRIV
NO, AFTER *YOU,* MISTER NELSON.
PRIV
PRIVATE
KLIK!

The rest of the story you know too well.
It's been told a lot of ways, with many other people in my life, but this is the way I choose to remember it when I think of you.

Foggy never found love. You found out that Daredevil and Matt Murdock were one and the same.
And now...
And now you are dead.
When I began writing to you, I felt as if I had lost something.
But, in the end, I think... I'd like to think that I found something.


Forgiveness.
All this time I... I don't think I ever forgave myself for what happened to you.
How I've carried around inside me the guilt of knowing that if you hadn't walked into our offices that day, looking for a job -
-- you might be alive today.

And I've thought a lot about my Dad.
All he ever wanted was to make sure I didn't grow up to be an "uneducated pug" like he saw himself.
He made his living with his fists and he called "Fogwell's Gym" his home away from home.
The gym offered not only my father, but also everyone who walked through that door, a chance to make something of themselves.
SIGNS
I bought the old place and fixed it up. We got Melvin Potter to run it for us. He used to be The Gladiator, but life gave him a second chance.
I Finally found a way I could honor my father beyond wearing his colors...

Do you know how some people say "I see" when they mean, "I understand"? It is like I can see now. A blind man who can see, Karen, is a rare thing.
Like you were.
And since we never know what is going to happen tomorrow, I wouldn't trade all my yesterdays for the time we had together.
GYM
Bartholomew Jacks
KURTZ HATS
ONE FLIGHT UP
JB CLEANERS
I miss you, Karen...
...and I will always love you.
LOEB SALE 2001

Book One: The CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

Book Two: THE MEASURE OF A MAN

Book Three: STEPPING INTO THE RING

Book Four: NEVER LEAD WITH YOUR LEFT

Book Five: AGAINST THE ROPES

Book Six: THE FINAL BELL

"The Measure of a Man Is Not In How He Gets Knocked to the Mat, It Is In How He Gets Up."

Those are the words blind attorney Matthew Murdock's father lived and died by.

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ISBN 0-7851-0969-2